Warrior

OSPREY PUBLISHING

Scottish Medieval Knight

1296-1460

Chris Brown

Compiler's note:

Warrior #107: *Scottish Medieval Knight* (1296-1460) by Chris Brown was announced by Osprey Publishing in 2005, and solicited for a mid-2006 release. The book, for reasons unclear, was never published*, leaving a gap in the bookshelves of collectors ever since.

What I have attempted to do is create a mere "placeholder" edition of Warrior #107, so that series collectors no longer have an incomplete collection. The body of this work is taken from a thesis paper** by Chris Brown, submitted in 2006 to the University of St. Andrews. Though the timing of the writing of this thesis would indicate that some, if not most of the material would have found its way into the Osprey work, this book is by no means an attempt to perfectly recreate what Warrior #107 would have looked like or read like; it is merely an attempt to repurpose Brown's related research into a faux Osprey booklet.

As the material herein is only tangentially related to the titular subject, anyone reading it to gain a better understanding of Scottish knighthood during the middle ages will do much better by seeking out the titles listed in the (exhaustive) bibliography, or in the author's own *The Knights of the Scottish Wars of Independence* (2007, Tempus Publishing, ISBN 9780752443935). While *The Knights of the Scottish Wars of Independence* would be a better approximation of what *Scottish Medieval Knight* would have been, I have no desire to make use of commercially available work. The thesis text I utilized is freely available through the CORE database, which bills itself as "an open, scholarly infrastructure for researchers by researchers;" thus, no one is taking the proverbial food out of the author's mouth by reading or downloading this title.

This book was (amateurishly) formatted in the same size of the other *Warrior* books, so that it can be physically printed and bound, should the reader wish to do so. Trade dress, fonts, layout and overall packaging were all chosen to be as close as possible to Osprey's **Warrior** series design, circa 2006. Please share this work freely online, and enjoy it for what it's worth.

Martin Plagiar, Series Editor

***At least, never published *by Osprey*. It's reasonable to assume that *The Knights of the Scottish Wars of Independence* (publishing information above) is a repackaging and expansion of *Scottish Medieval Knight: 1296-1460*, which itself is reckoned to be a repackaging and expansion of the thesis that forms the contents of this very book.**

I suspect that Osprey cancelled the project over concerns that the material was particularly focused on *Lothian* knighthood as opposed to being generally focused on *Scottish* knighthood; this is the chief criticism that reviewers have lobbed at *The Knights of the Scottish Wars of Independence.* Additionally, the writing is informative, but boring and dry.

**** Full thesis title: *WE ARE COMMAND OF GENTILMEN. SERVICE AND SURVIVAL AMONG THE LESSER NOBILITY OF LOTHIAN DURING THE WARS OF INDEPENDENCE, 1296-1341. A Thesis Submitted For the Degree of PhD at the University of St. Andrews, by Chris Brown.***

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1296-1460

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WE ARE COMMAND OF GENTILMEN:

SERVICE AND SURVIVAL AMONG THE KNIGHTHOOD AND LESSER NOBILITY OF LOTHIAN DURING THE WARS OF INDEPENDENCE, 1296-1341

AUTHOR'S INTRODUCTION

This work examines the political, social and, in particular, military conditions that influenced the allegiance of the men and women of the political community of Lothian, that is to say those people with personal landholding, legal and military obligations whose services were crucial to the efficient administration of the sheriffdom and whose support was courted by kings and magnates alike.The key issue is the high degree of survival among these minor landed families. The upper strata of Scottish political society underwent considerable changes in the early to middle fourteenth century through the fortunes of war, in particular through the disinheritance of the Comyn family and their allies early in the reign of Robert I. Some families lost their Scottish properties, such as the Balliols and the Comyns. Others grew in stature; notably the Douglases and, in Lothian specifically, the Setons and the Lauders. Most landholders would probably have been content to retain their inheritances, and indeed, virtually all of the Lothian landed families of the late thirteenth century would seem to have managed to do just that.

A high rate of success is not necessarily evidence that something is easily achieved; the retention of family properties was a complex business in wartime. In the period 1296-1314 the political community had to discharge their financial, legal and military burdens to the party currently in charge, but without permanently compromising themselves with the opposition, who might, after all, be in a position to exert lordship themselves at some point in the future. The military burdens are central to this thesis. Army service was a very obvious indication of allegiance. Given the nature of the normal practice of war in thirteenth and fourteenth century Europe, it is inevitable that this study examines the nature and incidence of armoured cavalry service in Lothian. The overwhelming majority of that service was performed by minor landholders. Records of their service in garrisons or their forfeiture as rebels provide us with a guide to the rate and incidence of defections from one party to another and therefore some guide to the degree to which a particular party was able to impose their lordship. The text explores the various challenges that faced the lesser landholders and more prosperous tenants and burgesses who lived through the Wars of Independence from the campaign of 1296 which ended the reign of King John and imposed the rule of Edward I, until 1341 when Edinburgh castle was recovered by the Scots from the forces of Edward III. It also questions the extent to which Edward III was able to impose his lordship in Lothian, considers the nature of the forces ranged against him and challenges the perception that only the outbreak of the Hundred Years War prevented the operational defeat of the Bruce party.

The siege of Edinburgh castle in 1341 marked the end of the last attempt by an English medieval king to provide Lothian with a government. Naturally this would not have been abundantly apparent at the time; however subsequent English invasions, though they might attack Edinburgh, were not designed to bring about the conquest of Lothian. The political environment of Lothian landholders therefore differed substantially in 1296-41 compared to the century either side of the Wars of Independence in that the minor nobility faced difficult decisions which had to be made on assessments of the likely eventual success of the Balliol, Plantagenet and Bruce parties.

Chris Brown
August 18, 2006

Fifteenth Century Depiction of Edward I (kneeling) paying homage to Philip IV (seated).

MILIT ARY ACTIVITY IN LOTHIAN

CHAPTER ONE:

1296-1304

In 1296 Edward I conquered and deposed his vassal John Balliol in a matter of five months. The fall of Berwick in March and the apparently brief cavalry action at Dunbar in Aprill and the subsequent, almost immediate, surrender of Dunbar castle seems, superficially, to be small reason for the military and political collapse of the Scottish effort against Edward I in the spring and summer of 1296. Although King John did not surrender and abdicate until July it would seem that he made no effort to continue the fight after March 1296 himself and that nobody else had the capacity or inclination to continue the fight on his behalf. John's withdrawal and Edward's pursuit may not, of course, be the whole story. Thirteenth-century records can hardly be described as all-encompassing, but we can be confident that Edward's armies were not seriously opposed in any of the areas they traversed, or at least not sufficiently so to delay seriously, let alone prevent, their intended operations.

The fall of Dunbar and then Edinburgh castles in 1296 and the ease with which Edward I was able to install an administration might be construed as evidence to support the contention that Lothian, and the other comIties of the south-east, were particularly amenable to annexation by the Plantagenets. Other evidence could be construed in a similar light. We know that Lothian men served as jurors under Edward I's administration as early as August 1296 4 and that men from Lothian, and from the south-east generally, were performing military service in his armies and garrisons.s Lothian men sought justice in Edward's courts and the overwhelming majority (so far as we can tell) of the political community became Edward's homagers, all within the first year of the Plantagenet administration.

There are strengths to the 'Anglophile Lothian' point of view adopted by E.M.Barron but, as Professor Barrmv has demonstrated, there are also major weaknesses. The battle of Dunbar and the fall of the castle would not seem to have resulted in heavy casualties. The proposition that one formation of King Edward's cavalry, alone and unaided, killed Scots in their thousands, simply beggars belief. Nonetheless, the political and moral aspects were enormous. Armies are of little value without leaders and cohesion. Both were lost at Dunbar. A considerable number of men were held as prisoners of 'var, including at least thirty who hailed from, or had extensive interests in Lothian, such as Herbert de Morham, David Graham and Edmund de Ramsay, each of whom would defect to and from the Plantagenet cause on a number of occasions (see Appendix for profIles of the Morham, Graham and Ramsay families). Superficially it would seem unlikely that the absence of so small a number from a political community that consisted of at least 300 men and women II would severely restrict the potential for that community to offer armed resistance to an invader, however, there are a number of factors to be considered. The Lothian men who served in the 1296 campaign may not have represented the whole strength of the community in arms, but they must surely be assumed to include a substantial proportion of men with military experience or ambition and also the men with the most extensive military responsibilities, the sheriffs and those with baronial status who had the 'leadership' of men in a given vicinity. The men captured at Dunbar might only be a very small portion of the political community of Lothian, but their absence would have been much more significant in terms of military capacity and organisation than their numbers would suggest.

Even if, as a group, the prisoners of war did not represent a disproportionate share of the militarily obliged part of the community, the very fact that they had been in the field inevitably means that they were among the more fit and able members of that group. Some members of the group must, at any time, have been sufficiently youthful, elderly or physically unsuited to war to have been ineligible for service. Some of them would almost certainly have been female or clerics, though these persons presumably provided substitutes or perhaps paid cash in lieu of service.

We can be reasonably confident, then, that the prisoners were men of the right age and capacity - competence is a different matter - to discharge military service. Their absence would have been a hindrance to continuation of the fight, in terms both of personal service as men-at-arms and of local leadership. The number of prisoners held after Dunbar was quite small and we cannot be sure that absolutely all of the 200 or so Scottish prisoners mentioned in record were in fact prisoners of war at all, let alone men captured either in the battle or the subsequent surrender of Dunbar castle. Nor can we be sure that all those taken at either location are identified in surviving record. Given that over 100 men-at-arms were stationed in Dunbar castle at the time of the battle l3 and that we can safely assume that the armigerous cavalry arm of the Scottish army \vas rather larger than the balance of 100 men taken during or after the battle, it is clear that the majority of the Scottish men-at-arms serving in King John's army did not fall captive in 1296. They either escaped from the battle and returned home or they were captured or surrendered, had their parole accepted, and were allowed to depart. If this were the case then the number of men who might be expected to give service to the Balliol cause after Dunbar would be further reduced.

Regardless of the political rights or wrongs of the situation generally, men who had given their parole could hardly be expected to break it. Defeat in one battle was not the only factor to weaken the position of King John. From the outbreak of the war he had not enjoyed the support of all the important sources of leadership and manpower in his kingdom. A number of important figures in the political community of Scotland chose to serve in Edward I's army. The Earl of Carrick chose to support Edward, possibly in the hope of being chosen as the successor to King John. His choice of alignment would probably have had little direct effect on the military/political community of Lothian since he had little or nothing in the way of estates there, but the Annandale and Carrick tenants who held property from the Bruce family must surely have been influenced by the Earl's decision, thus reducing the number of men-at-arms available to turn out in the Balliol cause. More significantly Patrick Earl of Dunbar served in the Plantagenet army despite the fact that his countess, Mrujorie Comyn (daughter of the late Alexander, Earl of Buchan) held his chief castle, Dunbar, in the Balliol interest. It would be unreasonable to assume that all of the Earl's tenants sided against him in the campaign of 1296. Some proportion of the men-at-arms who served under the countess were certainly Lothian men such as Alexander Sinclair (see Appendix), John Currie, Malcolm de Haddington, Brice le Tailleur, Herbert de Morham (see AppendL-x) and Thomas Byset (see Appendix), who all appear in a document dated 16 May 1296 as prisoners of war IS among more than 100 other Scottish knights and esquires (and one clerk) taken at Dunbar castle.

It is open to question whether there was any strong support in Lothian for continuing the fight at all. The king of Scotland had been defeated by the king of England. It may have been some time since this had last occurred, but it had happened before. The centre of Lothian administration, Edinburgh castle, had been occupied by an English garrison on numerous occasions in the past, all of which had proved to be of limited duration. The political community of Lothian may have assumed that Edward's

Administration would be a temporary institution pending the making of a new king of Scots. No doubt the new king would be very much under the sway of Edward I, but it is difficult to assess whether or not that would have been a real issue to the minor landholders who comprised the bulk of the political community. They did not, after all, have much say in matters of kingship. When Margaret of Norway was acknowledged as heir to Alexander or when John Balliol was acknowledged as King of Scots, the opinion of the freeholders and burgesses of local political communities would not have been a matter of great concern to the spiritual and temporal magnates who formed what we might regard as the 'national' political community. When Edward I took custody of Scottish royal castles in 1291-1298, it is a virtual certainty that the minor nobles of Lothian were not consulted and that there was no noticeable degree of resistance to Edward's officials.

In 1296 not only was there an absence of active resistance in the field, but Edinburgh Castle, a major strength, surrendered after a brief siege. Edward deployed three 'engines' to cast stones into the castle 'day and night' and the garrison sought terms after five days, but the shooting apparently continued for another three days thereafter, though Edward himself had moved on to Linlithgow. Perhaps the garrison had asked better terms than Edward was prepared to concede, but the possibility that Edward was prepared to offer no terms other than unconditional surrender cannot be discounted.

There may have been a shortage of men-at-arms to man the walls of Edinburgh castle due to the demands of the army beaten at Dunbar, but in fact there would have been little point in holding out against King Edward. Obliging him to mount a long siege would not be likely to impede his operations sufficiently to allow the Balliol party to raise an army capable of restoring the situation through combat, and a close siege, if maintained competently, must eventually be successful unless the garrison can be relieved by an external force. It would hardly have been unreasonable if the men who were responsible for the safe-keeping of the castle - and there must surely have been someone - had concluded that no such force was likely to be raised quickly enough to justify the risks of offering resistance.

In addition to the shock of defeat and the absence of the prisoners of war, the lack of a generally-acknowledged source of lordship to co-ordinate resistance in the immediate aftermath of Dunbar and Edward's march to Elgin, would have made overt activity in Lothian worthless militarily and dangerous personally. ill addition to the obvious risks of combat a man who took up arms against the Edwardian government could be forfeited of his lands. If opposition to Edward were eventually to prove successful he would expect to have his property restored, but what if it failed? He might be restored as part of a general political settlement if the Scots were sufficiently successful in their war with the English to force Edward to negotiate rather than conquer. If Edward was completely successful, and that must have looked like a very real possibility by the winter of 1296, he might never regain his property.

In addition to national political issues, there was a local problem. Although John had been king of Scotland he did not have the benefit of strong personal traditional leadership bonds in Lothian. The Balliol family, though extensive landholders elsewhere in the country, had little, if anything, in the way of Lothian interests and several men who did have local interests were either prisoners of war, like Herbert de Morham, William Curry, Edmund de Ramsay, William and Henry de Sinclair or were aligned with the Plantagenet cause, like the Earl of March. Also, a great many Lothian men had accepted Edward's kingship by appending their seals to the Ragman Roll. The lack of a major active local political presence with a strong commitment to the Balliol cause, then, may have made it easier for Edward's administration to take up the reins of power in Lothian in 1296, this

may have been a lesson learned for those who would gain, or attempt to gain, Lothian over the next fifty years. As we shall see, there is evidence to suggest that Edward II (if not Edward 1), Robert I, Edward III and David II would all elevate men they felt they could rely on to positions of local prominence, presumably in an effort to establish a local habit or tradition of allegiance to the party in question. That traditional local sympathies could be a significant factor in European medieval political life cannot be seriously questioned and we should not expect Scotland to have been radically out of step. Almost forty years after the deposition of his father Edward Balliol was still able to callon traditional loyalty to his family in the southwest.

Mounting resistance to a powerful regime is, under any circumstances, a difficult and dangerous course of action. Even in situations where there is a clearly-popular 'national' cause, with an active political force fighting for that cause with the help of sympathetic agencies and even where the occupation's general policies are very brutal, it can take years before resistance becomes a serious issue for the occupying power, let alone start to threaten its stability. In 1296 the defeat of the king's army, the fall of Dunbar and other castles, the passage of Edward I's troops, the fall of Edinburgh castle, the absence of Lothian military men as prisoners of war or perhaps as fugitives would all have been factors in reducing further the likelihood of local resistance.

Furthermore, if it was the case that men who surrendered or were captured gave their parole we should not assume that they all returned home with charger, arms and armour. The surrender of an army might well include safeguards for personal equipment, but by tradition both mount and armament of a man killed or captured were the prizes of his vanquisher and would have a significant cash value. Even if the individual was free to fight, they might not have the means of doing so, or at least not as a man-at-arms. Despite the disruption of traditional authority and the installation of new officials there \vas some level of resistance in Lothian within a short time of Edward's conquest.

On 23 July 1297 Edward I's treasurer for Scotland, Hugh de Cressingham, wrote to his king that the Scots had appointed bailiffs and officials in some counties and that no county was properly held ' ... save for Berwick and Roxburgh, and they only lately. If anyone was in a position to judge the effective extent of Edward's Scottish government it would have been Cressingham, so it would appear either that Lothian had yet to be secured for Plantagenet rule a year and more after Edward's initial conquest, or that counties which had been effectively secured in 1296 had been recovered by the Scots, or at least lost to the English, by the summer of 1297.

Naturally, the defeat of a major English field army at Stirling Bridge in September 1297 did nothing to improve the situation of Edward's administration. In the autumn Wallace was able to lead a force to Haddington, where, on 11 October, he issued an invitation to the merchants of Cologne and Hamburg to resume their Scottish trading operations. His ability to lead a force into the heart of Lothian is perhaps less indicative of the military situation than his ability to extract that force without recorded interference by the garrison forces in the sheriffdom. Additionally, three castles, including the major stronghold of Dirleton, must have been gained by the Scots at some juncture since Edward was obliged to detach a force under Bishop Bek to recapture them. Some consideration must be given to Wallace's motives for mounting his expedition. Militarily and politically, marching a force through Lothian was a matter of some significance. To the Plantagenet administration it was a declaration Balliol supporters were intent on ensuring that even if John's writ did not run in Lothian, Edward's could not be guaranteed. If Wallace could seize Haddington, even if only for a day or two, Edward's government could hardly be said to have control of

the land. If Haddington was within Wallace's reach, then so was virtually any other place in Lowland Scotland that did not boast a castle or at least lay within range of a large and active garrison.

In addition to these military and political issues, we should bear in mind that a very large part of the community would have had quite enough disruption and instability in their lives. The tensions between the Bruce and Balliol parties before 1292, the Dunbar campaign and the subsequent occupation would undoubtedly have persuaded some at least that the risks involved in carrying on the war were not warranted by any gain likely to be made even if the aims of the war - and it would be difficult to be clear about what exactly such war aims would be - were completely achieved, a condition that would have seemed unlikely at the time.

Men and women with responsibilities - nobles, free tenant landholders, burgesses - seem to have had nothing to fear from the Edwardian administration so long as they fulfilled their obligations and accepted his rule. As long as that administration was visibly in power they could be reasonably secure in their positions. Although the Balliol administration could not prevent acceptance of Plantagenet lordship by direct military action, they could hardly afford to allow that acceptance to grow into a tradition of allegiance, and therefore of service, unopposed. Wallace may have gone to Haddington to undermine the Plantagenet administration, but he was surely making a point to the local political community as well.

Those who were active on behalf of the English administration or considering activity (joining a garrison for example) could not fail to have been concerned at the arrival of a pro-Balliol force deep in Plantagenet-held territory. No doubt Wallace was waving the flag as well as rattling a sabre, but from the point of view of the political community of Lothian the whole exercise may have looked rather more like threatening behaviour than patriotic encouragement. Men like Matthew de Hawthornden and William de Fenton, restored to their properties in the autumn of 1296, had obviously entered the peace of Edward I. In the event of a Balliol restoration they might well find it difficult to justify their actions. Similarly, men who took part in the 'normal' business of the sheriff court, such as the inquisitions in several sheriffdoms into the estate of Elena de la Zouche could hardly avoid accusations of collaboration with the enemy.

The findings of those inquisitions have survived and the jurors who reported to the sheriff of Edinburgh, Hugh Louther, were very clearly Lothian men: Henry de Ormiston, Nicholas de Preston, William son of Geoffrey de Bolton, Henry Ferrur of Tranent, Waldone de North Berwick, David de Pencaitland (see Appendix), Gilbert de Drem, Thomas de Straiton and Jordan de Aldhamston all bore names derived from Lothian landholdings. The others, William de Sydeserf and John Scot, were both Ragman Roll homagers of Lothian. There can be no doubt that these men were discharging their normal judicial obligations, but under the authority of Edward I rather than of King John.

Although there was not a complete absence of armed resistance to the Edwardian government in Lothian in the period between Falkirk in 1297 and the fight at Roslin in 1303 there certainly was not a general state of war throughout the county?8 Equally we cannot be sure that there was not widespread sporadic violence, only that there was not sufficient activity for it to be regularly cited in Edwardian administration records as an argument for increasing the military establishment. Fluctuation in the size of garrisons is, in any case, a very poor guide to the tactical situation. The enlargement or reduction of any particular garrison or group of garrisons could occur for any number of reasons not immediately related to the progress of the war generally. The availability of men, money

and materials, the greater political significance of some locations compared to others, the preference of men to serve in particular areas and their unwillingness to serve in others, would all be issues which, although of some importance to the military administrators of the day, cannot be clearly identified now.

Further, having the people, the money and the munitions to provide a garrison does not guarantee the capacity to put that garrison in place, let alone provide for its needs once established. Perhaps most importantly, the level of resource applied to solving any military problem, in this case judging the military force required to achieve local dominance and perhaps additional objectives of which we are unaware, is not simply a product of the availability of the means, but of the subject's estimate of the situation; in this instance the perceived threat constituted by the Scots at a given moment.

That there was a military administration in place by October 1296 is apparent from the appointment of Sir Walter Huntercombe as its commander and various documents relating to the supply of the garrison at Edinburgh. Unfortunately there seems to be no indication of the number of men under command there until 1298. On 25 November Sir John de Kingestone was appointed to relieve Huntercombe as commander in Lothian. On the same day King Edward issued an instruction to Sir Simon Fraser to support Sir John with twenty men-at-arms on barbed (armoured, or at least, protected) horses as required due to the fact that the 'constable ... has not sufficient force of his own.' Evidently there was a military presence at Edinburgh, and one that contained a heavy cavalry element, albeit one considered inadequate for offensive operations without additional support. The presence of Sir Simon's men may have been more a matter of political significance; a means of ensuring Scottish participation for propaganda purposes.

The scale of an operation calling for 200 men-at-arms ordered from Berwick at this time suggests that twenty men-at-arms, though hardly insignificant, was not a vital contribution the force. Sir Walter Huntercombe, now in command at Berwick, was ordered to make a 'foray' against the Scots in the company of Sir Simon 'and others' with 200 men-at-arms. It is quite possible that the phrase 'and others' refers to Scots, perhaps specifically those men from Berwickshire who were in the peace of Edward I. Part of the 'price' of being in Edward's peace and of enjoying one's heritage must surely have been the acceptance of the usual range of responsibilities owed by landlords to their superior or sovereign, including military service obligations.

It would appear that Sir Simon's contribution was of some material significance since he would be providing ten per cent of the manpower. The intended target for the 'foray' of November 1298 is not mentioned in the sources, either as a security measure or because the intended target was so obvious that it did not need to be stated. It would seem most likely that the intention was to conduct operations in the south-east of Scotland. This is a strong indication that the administration had not established complete control of that part of the country that was most accessible to intervention, but also that the administration could successfully call upon the military service obligations of some proportion of the political community.

The fIrst full description of Sir John de Kingestone's garrison dates from 28 May 1300 though, as Dr. Fiona Watson has demonstrated there were arrangements in place for the logistical support of what was effectively 'a small standing army' from 1298, part of which was stationed at Edinburgh. Although there was a total of 67 men-at-arms in the complement a shortage of chargers reduced the number available for operations to sixty, but Sir John would have been taking a considerable risk if he committed them all to action

away from Edinburgh castle.

There is no doubt that there was a garrison before this date. On 9 August 1298, Sir John had informed King Edward that the Scots under the Earl of Buchan and the Bishop of St. Andrews had crossed the Forth and marched on Glasgow, from where they intended to move to the borders with the intention of joining forces with Balliol supporters in the forest of Selkirk. Sir John had received intelligence that Sir Simon Fraser had already met with leaders of the Scots and that he was intending to defect, if he had not in fact already done so. It would seem that the Scots had already been active in the Edinburgh area since Sir John referred to a day when they 'came suddenly before our castle, and on which Sir Thomas D' Arderne was taken.'

The same letter informs the king of difficulties with the local populace as well as the major initiatives of the Scots. Margaret de Penicuik (see Appendix) was reported as having received her son, Hugh, and his men (presumably Sir John assumed that these were men from the Penicuik estate) despite the fact that Hugh was a rebel. Sir John felt obliged to take action and made a descent on the 'ville' of Penicuik and impounded all the cattle there. Some local men then demanded the return of their cattle, claiming that they were at peace with the Edwardian administration, and had taken no part in the raid.

Sir John returned the cattle to the 'poor people to whom they belonged' and retained the rest, presumably on the assumption that they were the property of Margaret or Hugh de Penicuik or of the 'other ill-doers' that he had reported as being 'harboured and received by them'. This episode reveals a real operational difficulty for Sir John and his various successors as local commanders in Edward I's Scottish government. How could one adequately and reliably identify the enemy? The 'poor people' of Penicuik might be entirely honest in their claim to be 'at peace'; if so, the confiscation of their cattle would not help them to see the Edwardian government as a source of 'good lordship'.

The sheriff had felt obliged to report the activity of Hugh de Penicuik and take action against him, but that would seem to have been a relatively rare instance of active service for the Edinburgh garrison; indeed, the fact that Hugh de Penicuik was able to approach Edinburgh at all could be construed as evidence that at that particular juncture, the garrison was not fit to carry out its duties properly. Although he had obviously been a problem to the administration, Hugh, like the overwhelming majority of Scots seeking to defect, was accepted into Edward's peace without apparent difficulty. Although there is no official instrument recording the restoration of Hugh's property in Scotland, there is a document instructing the sheriff of Northumberland to restore to him various properties there. It may have been a standard practice of the time that Scots forfeited of property in England had to have individual writs in order to be restored to that property once they were no longer in a state of rebellion, whereas their Scottish properties could be restored as part of a general settlement.

The Scots may not have been able to make noticeable progress 'within Lothian after the battle of Falkirk, but they were active in its vicinity, notably sending a force under Sir John Comyn of Badenoch and Sir Simon Fraser from Biggar to Roslin in February 1303. The battle that ensued was not particularly large, but it was of considerable importance. The ability of the Scots to intercept, engage and defeat a force less than a day's ride from Edinburgh was hardly a sign that the Plantagenet cause was winning the war, or even that it was capable of protecting the inhabitants of Lothian from raiding parties. On the other hand, if Sir Thomas Grey is correct in his assertion that Comyn and Fraser had lifted their siege of Linlithgow, presumably to move against the English force under Manton, Dunbar and Segrave, that may be an indication that the Scots did not have the

necessary strength to prevent the siege being lifted by an English expeditionary force on even a relatively modest scale, though it would also suggest that the English garrisons were unable to prevent a siege being imposed in the first place, hence the necessity for a relief column.

According to Thomas Grey, the Scottish force had been in action at the new peel at Linlithgow, over thirty miles away, until 20 February when they lifted their investment and moved south. Given the difficulties of communication Segrave may have been under the impression that the Scots were still engaged there, and felt that he could raise the siege and perhaps bring the Scots to battle. Certainly Reimund Walrund and Robert Seueldedy were paid the substantial sum of thirty shillings for making a night reconnaissance to Linlithgow in search of the Scottish army Alternatively, the Scots may have had wind of his intention to move on Linlithgow and decided to intercept him once they were sure of his line of approach.

Either way, it is clear that both the Scots and the English were prepared to offer or accept battle. The initial attack occurred at the village of Roslin, where Sir John Segrave and Patrick, Earl of Dunbar, currently in Plantagenet, allegiance had halted for the night. Superficially it might seem that the Plantagenet commanders were not expecting an attack at all, let alone a night attack, since they chose not to 'close up' their formation, but left the advance guard at 'a league distant at a hamlet' or even divided into three formations 'two leagues apart'. There are a number of possible explanations for the division of the English force. Since the action took place in February we can be confident that the weather conditions would be far too cold for men and horses to be lying out through the night. Unless the force was very small indeed it would almost inevitably be too large to be accommodated in a modest Lothian village and a further billeting area would be required whether an attack was expected or not, so division of force was probably forced on Sir John and the Earl, regardless of tactical preference.

The failure of the English command to perceive, and take steps to neutralise, the threat posed by Comyn's force is clearly demonstrated by the resulting engagement; however Comyn's force was not necessarily a reflection of an extensive sympathy with the Balliol cause among Lothian landholders merely because the fight took place in their neighbourhood. The location of a battle is the product of a wide range of factors; if the English force had chosen a different route there might have been no engagement at all, and since the engagement was very much a function of war at what we might reasonably see as a 'national' level, it would not be inevitable, or even particularly significant, that any Lothian men were involved. Sir John Comyn's force was, in all probability, an 'ad hoc' formation, assembled from immediately available manpower to respond to a threat or take advantage of an opportunity. Unquestionably there were Lothian men in the Balliol camp generally, but their presence at, or absence from, any particular action should not be seen as a determining factor in the location of that action since they might already be committed elsewhere. Similarly, that neither of the leaders of the Scots were Lothian men and that the Earl of Dunbar was in the Plantagenet force is not indicative of the political leanings of the Lothian community. With the exception of Wallace, the leadership of the Balliol cause was generally vested in senior nobles. The nearest thing to a Lothian magnate would have been Earl Patrick, who, with English garrisons surrounding his Earldom, could hardly be expected to do anything other than accept Plantagenet government throughout the period 1296-1314.

Although a battlefield success, Roslin illustrates the weakness of the Balliol cause. A battle could be forced in Plantagenet-held territory, and a successful outcome gained, but the Balliol party was not in a position to exert lordship in Lothian any more than Wallace

had been in 1297. The restoration of King John may have seemed like a realistic possibility once he had been released into the custody of the Pope and then to that of Philip IV, but the peace agreed between Philip and Edward in 1303, endorsed in advance by John, destroyed any likelihood of that and in February 1304 the Balliol party came to Edward's peace, mostly under quite generous conditions. The light nature of the penalties imposed on the Balliol party activists can be interpreted in two ways.

Edward may have sought to bring Scots to his allegiance through demonstrating a degree of magnanimity in the hope that these men would become his agents in the future administration of Scotland, a possibility supported by the fact that a number of these men served the Plantagenet government for years to come; men like Sir William Oliphaunt who held Stirling castle against Edward I in 1304, was a prisoner of war in England until 1308, but was an officer in Edward II's government, commanding the Perth garrison until it fell to Robert I in January 1313, at which point (or shortly thereafter) he joined the Bruce party. Alternatively he may have decided that the war could not be brought to a satisfactory conclusion through force of arms. Edward must have been aware that he was unlikely to live for very much longer. The generosity of his terms perhaps indicates a degree of desperation to achieve a political settlement.

Several factors discouraged Lothian men from supporting the Balliol party in 1296-1304. Obviously the power of the Plantagenet administration was a major consideration, as was the inability of the Guardians to counter that power. Wallace's seizure of Haddington probably made some impression on the local political community, but not enough to bring large numbers of recruits to the Balliol cause. There is no evidence to suggest that the community of Lothian was hostile to the Balliol party, but equally there is nothing to suggest that they were very well-disposed to it either. The absence of significant local leaders with a strong commitment to King John was therefore a significant issue in itself. Men whose position in society relied on the patronage of King John might be expected to take up arms on his behalf since they might be compromised by his deposition, but the political community of Lothian in 1296-1304 were, in the main, men whose local prominence pre-dated John's reign. The Balliol party really had very little to offer as an incentive for Lothian men to resist the Plantagenet government other than the prospect of political independence from England. Many of them had, in any case, given their allegiance to Edward I in 1296. They may not have had much choice and medieval jurists certainly understood the nature of duress, but in practical terms, opposing Edward I's government was unlikely to result in anything better than forfeiture and possibly death.

Despite the victory at Roslin, the Balliol party had run its course by early 1304. The French had abandoned the cause of King John (as had John himself) and made peace with England. The country was exhausted by the effort of fighting, the magnates had accepted Edward's rule through the Strathord agreement and by August 1305 the sole active representative of the Balliol cause was Sir William Wallace. Wallace was no longer the figure he had been in 1297. His defeat at Falkirk in 1298 had undermined his authority completely. He still enjoyed some sympathy, but he was unable to revitalise the Balliol cause as a serious proposition for ejecting the English. Indeed, by 1305 he may have been seen as something of an embarrassment, an obstacle to a political settlement and therefore more part of the problem than the solution. At the close of hostilities in 1304 there was no longer any effective 'patriotic' leadership. The Balliol cause had been identified with the 'patriotic' cause for obvious reasons, but with John himself rejecting any prospect of restoration, what would the Scots have been fighting for?

CHAPTER 2:
1304-1314

It is unlikely that the Strathord armistice, or Robert the Bruce's seizure of the crown, really had much immediate impact on the lives of Lothian people generally. War broke out again in 1306, but then there had been war almost continually for the better part of a decade, largely conducted well away from Lothian. The resumption of hostilities undoubtedly forced Edward I to maintain a rather greater level of military commitment in Scotland than he would have liked, though there would seem to be no evidence of extraordinary garrison expenditure in Lothian in the first few years of the Bruce war.

The Bruce cause did enjoy some measure of support among the Lothian gentry; a number of men were forfeited by Edward for their adherence to Robert I in 1306. A handful more, some of whom had in fact been active in the Bruce cause for two or three years, were forfeited by Edward II in 1312. The majority of the Lothian political community remained in Edwardian allegiance until 1314. As mentioned above, and more fully explored later, the Bruces had no established 'constituency' of support in Lothian, but even if they had, the presence of an extensive network of Plantagenet garrisons would have limited their activity. Had such sympathy existed and had it expressed itself in armed activity throughout Lothian (the latter would not have been an inevitable result of the former) the defeat of King Robert at Methven would surely have brought it to an end, at least temporarily.

Several men, (though hardly a major, or even particularly significant segment of the political community as a whole) with extensive interests in Lothian did support Robert I. Michael Wemyss, William de Somerville, Alexander Fraser and Alexander de Lindsay turned out for Robert at the time of, or immediately after, his enthronement- as did the tenants of Sir Henry de Pinkney, an English knight who had inherited land at Ballencrieff and at Luffness castle near Aberlady. Wemyss, Somerville, Fraser and Lindsay were all men of some standing, probably quite prominent among the political community of Lothian, but with extensive interests elsewhere - Lindsay and Somerville in Lanark and Wemyss in Fife.

They were hardly magnates, but they were fairly prominent people. Ballencreiff was a property of some significance which was held 'in capite' from the king for the service of one knight. In 1296 the most significant tenants of the estate had been Alexander Lindsay (presumably the same Alexander Lindsay forfeited in 1306 for supporting Robert I, see Appendix) John de Bickerton (see Appendix), Thomas de Colville and Henry Pinkney, the brother and heir of the late Robert. It is reasonable to assume that Henry sought the forfeiture of Lindsay, Bickerton and Colville rather than the unnamed and unnumbered cottars mentioned in the Post Mortem Inquisition'S which had conflrmed Henry as the legitimate heir. For the first eight years of King Robert's reign, the bulk of recorded military service performed by Lothian men was in Edwardian garrisons, either for payor to fulfill land tenure obligations. The paid men can be traced through muster rolls and horse valuations. Tenure service would not seem to have been recorded on a named basis, but was presumably administered by an official of the sheriff. The significance of the contribution that Lothian men made to the support of Edward II's government cannot be adequately defined in either an administrative or operational context, but it is fair to assume that the political significance to Edward of retaining that support (and preferably extending it) was considerable if he was to maintain his rule. It is not clear that these with

payments were a normal part of the Earl's income, or if they were extraordinary payments allowed to him as an adherent of Edward III for the upgrading of the castle. However since similar sums were still being collected more than 100 years later (when the value of currency had dwindled considerably) we might be entitled to assume that they were normal practice for the Earls of Dunbar.

Earl Patrick in tum owed £30 per annum castleguard to Berwick castle while it was in the hands of Edward III, but it is not clear whether this was the normal practice under the kings of Scots; the evidence we have for this payment in the accounts of the Edwardian sheriff of Berwick 1336-37 refers to the period after the Earl's defection to the Scots and may not be a valid reflection of normal practice but an innovation of Edward Ill's government of the territories.

What we might call- for want of a better term- national, or perhaps kingly, war was a much more regular event in the first half of the fourteenth century than it had been in the thirteenth, but what landholder was going to be able to defy a king's army at the gate? The landholder might have the men to defend his walls, but only for a certain number of days, and the men on whom the landholder depended had their own concerns. While they were undoubtedly due service to their lord they were also due both service and obedience to the king.

As long as there was competition between rivals for the crown the position of minor landholders \vas very vulnerable to changes in higher authority. If they chose to support their immediate superior they might find themselves on the wrong side of whichever crown claimant was currently in control of the area; if they chose not to support their immediate landlord they might well find themselves dispossessed should the changing fortunes of war start to favour the other side.

In 1296, Patrick, Earl of Dunbar was granted by Edward I the forfeitures of those of his tenants who had not yet come to the king's peace, complete with the services of all relevant subtenants. Patrick was not the only recipient of this bounty. Writs were issued to several sheriffs in favour of ten other magnates at the same time. Edward III was not so generous (or trusting?). In March 1334 he gave instructions to sheriffs to allow Patrick to occupy the property of forfeited tenants, but only for a fixed period 46 and also allowed him to retain the £30 per annum of castleguard due to Berwick from his properties until a total of 100 marks had been retained for upgrading Dunbar castle: a privilege no doubt much resented when the castle was under siege by the English in 1338 assuming that the funds had actually been spent on re-fortification.

Castleguard evidence is thin and scattered and the threads of information are quite varied. The obligation on Paisley abbey to supply oatmeal for Dumbarton, the undertaking of St. Andrews priory of responsibility for payment to the Loch Leven garrison on behalf of the community, the sums collected by Edwardian and Bruce administrations all suggest a structured system of financial, produce and personal service contributions to a network of royal garrisons supported by a wider segment of the society than just landholders with knight service obligations.

CHAPTER 3:
INCENTIVES, COERCION, LEADERSHIP AND COMMAND

Traditionally, it has been assumed that only English kings and their lieutenants could mobilise the resources to pay soldier's wages, but this is making an assumption based on a lack of evidence rather than a deduction based on knowledge. There are no Scottish magnate financial accounts showing wage rates for employed troops, but there is very little in the way of Scottish financial records for the transactions of the crown let alone of the aristocracy.

David II, when faced with the prospect of a major aristocratic revolt, drew £600 from his treasury to pay soldiers. It has been generally assumed that this money would have been expended on men-at-arms. At a rate of a shilling a day, he could have procured the services of 1200 men-at arms for ten days, but such a force would have been of very limited value without the archers and spearmen necessary to conduct a combined arms battle, and in any case, those of sufficient standing to equip themselves as men-at-arms were exactly the people with most to lose from changes in the government - whether through conquest or revolution. If they did not turn out to support the king they might well find themselves disinherited by a new regime which would inevitably have supporters who would need to be rewarded- and the same people were also most at risk from retribution should the crown survive an attempted revolution without their help- they did after all inevitably owe army service to the king even if they did not hold land from him directly. In any case, 1200 men-at-arms was a substantial, but not huge force even by the standards of the mid-fourteenth century, and the quality of Scottish men-at-arms (and their horses) was not necessarily of the highest calibre.

A combination of two or three powerful magnates might well aspire to raise such a force. According to Fordun, in the winter of 1335, when much of southern Scotland was in Plantagenet control, Sir William Douglas of Liddesdale, the Earl of Dunbar and Sir Andrew Murray were able to raise a considerable force, from the counties below the Forth and lead it to Culblean. If on the other hand David was paying wages to more humble types of soldier his money could go a long way to procuring an army beyond the capacities of any group of nobles. At a rate of threepence a day - which would be reasonable wages by the standards of the mid-fourteenth century - he would be able to maintain 4800 infantry for the same ten-day period. An infantry army was of course very vulnerable to sudden attack, particularly on the march, but David was due knight service and perhaps the earlier, less prestigious "riding service" from landholders in sufficient quantity that he should have had no great difficulty in raising an appropriate cavalry arm whose loyalty was dependent not on daily wages but on their continuing ownership of land.

The composition of David's army in 1363 is not the issue however. The point is that this is a clear example of a Scottish army in receipt of wages. The fact that this is the earliest example of waged Scottish soldiers (other than knights in household service) does not mean that Scottish soldiers had not been paid on previous occasions. Robert I was able to keep his armies in England from despoiling those areas that paid their ransoms; the army besieging Stirling in 1299 was in action for several months; the troops besieging Perth in 1339 were maintained by a cash subsidy from the Abbey of Arbroath (although it should be noted that the Steward, acting as guardian was clear that this was not to be regarded as a precedent). The garrison of Loch Leven castle in the same year was supported by a financial levy on the community of Fife, administered by the prior of

St. Andrews, and presumably had been supported in previous years through the same or similar arrangements. It would seem unreasonable to assume that the men who performed military service, particularly in situations where little or nothing could be expected in the way of ransoms or plunder, were rewarded with nothing more than their keep for their efforts. Naturally men who had been forfeited by one side would likely appear on the other in the hope of regaining their heritages.

Such men could be relied upon to fIght for the sake of their keep, but there would not have been a great many of them. Whilst accepting that numerical strength is only one factor among many, and that although it is always signifIcant it is very seldom the most significant factor in achieving victory, it is clear that the eventual successes of the Bruce party were dependent on their ability to draw men away from Plantagenet lordship in greater quantity than the Plantagenets could induce acceptance of their rule.

In any conflict, examining the relationship of the size of the force to the extent of the area of operational responsibility is a crucial part of gaining an understanding of the progress and outcome of the operations that comprise that conflict. Neither looking at the map nor counting heads on wage rolls will actually make much impression on that understanding unless it is done with an eye to the nature of terrain applied rather more closely than maps will allow and with a thought to both the objectives of operations conducted and the demands and conditions- economic, military and political- that the force in place must also address. We may be aware that the garrison of a particular castle consisted of a specifIed number of men, and even the distribution of those men between men-at-arms, archers (perhaps divided between longbowmen and crossbowmen) and other infantry, but that does not give us any information about how many men the garrison commander could afford to commit to a field operation.

The men of the garrison would have a number of duties to fulfill: enforcing general law-and-order, collecting rents and taxes, protecting convoys, gathering intelligence, disrupting the operations of the enemy, maintaining a visible military (and therefore political) presence in front of the local populace and, of course, the defence of the castle or burgh where the garrison was based.

The forfeiture of Lothian landowners in the years before Bannockbum clearly shows that the Bruce party was not without support in the Lothian area. Some of this support was undoubtedly because the landowners concerned had extensive property elsewhere in Scotland, which they feared losing if King Robert was successful, and which they did not think they would regain through the actions of King Edward. Some of these Lothian landholders may have been motivated by a strong sense of what, as Professor Barrow says, 'older historians were content to call the national cause', but we should not ignore the possibility that increasing desertion of the Edwardian cause in the period 1307-early 1314, demonstrated by a handful of forfeitures in 1312, was a product of the operational situation, brought on by the inability of the administration to keep the Bruce party out of Lothian or by the general military success of King Robert's forces.

The extensive restorations that can be identified after the battle of Dunbar are a strong indication that some form of 'blanket' forfeiture may have been enacted against all those who served King John in the 1296 campaign. It is not impossible that such an act may even have preceded hostilities in the hope, perhaps successful, that some people might be deterred from serving at alL The forfeiture of minor landholders seems to have been a sentence that could be rescinded on acceptance into the Plantagenet peace at the discretion of the sheriff or by a writ from the king to the sheriff. In the summer and autumn of 1296 restorations were ordered for at least thirty-five mesne tenants and forty-three

Tenants from Lothian, Berwick, Roxburgh, Lanark and Stirling were restored on the third September 1296 perhaps as a result of formally giving their allegiance to Edward since virtually all of them were Ragman Roll homagers on or before 28 August 1296.

Forfeiture was the "last resort" sanction against rebellious landholders because although it could be reversed, and in the period after the battle of Dunbar there are many examples of this, repeated restoration and forfeiture undermined the value of it as a threat to the recalcitrant and thereby damaged the prestige of the king. Although forfeiture was self-evidently not a successful policy, insofar as it was not effective in deterring defection to the Balliol or Bruce causes, it would be wrong to assume that it was a failed policy kept in place through inertia. The application of forfeiture was by no means the same in 1312 for example as it was in 1335.

In any event, we should not assume that the lands forfeited were necessarily in the control of the Edwardian administration, though some certainly were since revenue was being raised from them. In one case the return was actually greater than the normal peacetime valuation, an indication perhaps of the difference between the rental of the property and the actual return to the landholder. The landholder could be declared forfeit even though the administration was not in a position to enforce its will. Nor should we assume that an area out with the control of English administration was inevitably under the control of the Scots. The inability of local garrisons to collect rents and taxes, even the development of 'no-go' areas, is not a sufficient indicator that the opposition have actually gained that territory for themselves.

Whether or not that denial of territory is the product of the actions of the enemy is of course of secondary importance to the overall situation to the 'occupying' power - the fact is they have lost control of that area and inevitably the public perception of the ability of that power to maintain law and order would be damaged. Even with a very powerful and mobile force, maintaining effective civil order in the face of armed opposition would be a considerable challenge due to the nature of the terrain if nothing else.

Although Lothian has, by Scottish standards, a good deal of high-quality arable land there is also a great deal of broken country. An English writer complained in the winter of 1299 that as little as eight miles from Edinburgh an enemy force - in this case Hugh de Penicuik and his followers- could operate from a range of hills (the Pentlands) not easily penetrated by a large force. The arable areas of Lothian are hardly great rolling plains. The landscape is riven with deep river gorges separating low hill formations affording an unusually high incidence of covered approaches and withdrawals to the insurgent, and an exceptionally difficult terrain for reconnaissance by garrisons. There are of course many hilltops throughout Lothian from which one can see a great swathe of territory, but such 'vistas' are very misleading in almost any terrain; regardless of the nature of the terrain it is very seldom that anything less than 60% of the area bounded by our horizon is 'dead ground.

Given the fact that even the largest medieval armies were little more than a mere speck on the landscape it should be clear that small raiding forces would have been exceedingly difficult to detect and therefore almost impossible to intercept. Even if the insurgents could be identified as a target in time to deploy a force to pursue them, the nature of the countryside favours escape through concealment, and if the insurgents found it impossible to 'shake' their pursuers in daylight, they would almost inevitably do so with ease at nightfall. Line-of-sight considerations may seem a little laboured when applied to medieval conflict, but in fact topography is the defining non-human factor in any

tactical problem. Even with the active intelligence-gathering support of a large part of the population, counter-insurgency operations are legendarily difficult, without that support they are virtually impossible. The imposition of authority by military means, or the disruption of that authority are more dependent on a regular and convincing appearance of strength than on combat; both sides seek to further their interests essentially by intimidation of the population (and of course one another) rather than fighting.

This is a two-edged weapon however, particularly for an administration that is seen as an imposition. If the visible presence of the garrison forces is not extensive, the local populace may feel increasingly vulnerable to the insurgents, equally if it is too intrusive it might become a focus for resentment. Forcing battle would in itself have been a tactically challenging proposition for the garrison forces. In addition to the terrain problems, the garrisons were not generally strong enough in sum to be able to afford to put a large force into the field to chase the Scots. Even if the Scots were heavily outnumbered at any point in terms of men on active service throughout the theatre generally, the Edwardian administrations had far greater commitments.

Achieving local superiority in numbers was probably not too much of a problem for the Scots, therefore Edwardian forces could not afford to precipitately pursue and attack Scottish forces. It is, after all, difficult to tell when you are pursuing a fleeing enemy and when you are entering an ambush. The challenge of responding to such a situation can be seen in the structure of the battle of Roslin. Although the numbers involved were probably quite small - a few hundred Scots rather than the tens of thousands described by Bower and Fordun - the English forces were unable to concentrate in time to apply their superior numbers, partly, perhaps, due to their inability to find billets for the troops within easy supporting distance of one another.

Naturally, it is the objective of any rebel organization - and Edward certainly described his Scottish opponents as rebels - to replace the existing administration, which in the fourteenth century meant the eventual acquisition of the various centers of military and economic significance throughout the region, just as it would in any comparable insurgent conflict. Some modern thinkers have believed that 'urban' (in the very loosest sense of the word) areas must inevitably fall to insurgents that have secured the rural hinterlands on which those centers depend.

This is not necessarily valid in a medieval context. The great castles of Lothian like Edinburgh or Dirleton could be securely held by remarkably small garrisons so long as they were not called upon to conduct too much in the way of field operations, nor do they seem to have been under threat from the burgh community at Edinburgh other than those occasions when a force from outside Lothian (in 1338 and 1341) could intervene. As long as Edwardian governments were prepared to bear the expense of supporting their Lothian garrisons - if necessary from resources beyond the income that could be raised locally - those garrisons could severely compromise the establishment of a Bruce administration.

At some point in a conflict, if the insurgents enjoy enough success, the roles of insurgent and administration start to become reversed; in a sense, the garrisons become insurgents. The 'favorable terrain' to which they would withdraw after operations would be castles rather than camps in the hills, but their tactical and strategic condition would be based on the disruption of the Scots rather than the domination of the territory. Even if the Scots were to hold a territory but not the castle within it (as might have been the case at Stirling before the fall of the castle in 1299 or Edinburgh in 1314 and 1341), they would not necessarily be able adequately or consistently to contain the garrison militarily and its

relatively visible presence (compared to a band of fighters in the woods) would undermine the authority and prestige of King Robert's government. If the castle was a symbol of regal authority as well as a centre of government, the fact that it was in the possession of the enemy would not be beneficial to the public perception of the king, which may offer a political explanation for King Robert's destruction of castles to complement the accepted military rationale - that he was not in a position to garrison castles securely and that their recovery by the Edwardian administration would threaten the security of his rule.

As the general political situation developed, people adjusted their individual positions; someone who had been steadfast in support of King John was not necessarily going to transfer their loyalty to King Robert, who was really no less an usurper than Edward I and a sacrilegious murderer to boot, and the vast majority of those landholders had already given their allegiance to Edward in 1296. Even if an individual was strongly motivated in favour of King Robert or by a 'national consciousness' or other motive, they might find themselves in the 'peace' or even service of the Edwards for simple practical reasons like stability and cash wages.

The subject of Scots in Plantagenet service has already been addressed, but the presence of Edwardian garrisons would hardly be an incentive for Lothian men to turn out for the other side and the attractions of (supposedly) regular payor the belief that the Bruce party were not going to win - and in 1307-1308 at the very least that would not have been an unrealistic assumption - would surely discourage defection.

Those strongly opposed to the Bruces obviously had an incentive to support the Edwardian government. However, they too were affected by the wider situation. Immediately after Bannockburn any Edwardian administration as had survived the fall of Edinburgh castle seems to have disappeared overnight. Those who had been in Edward's peace but wished to retain their Lothian properties would obviously have had to seek an accommodation with King Robert. Some, but by no means all of these people would make their peace with Edward III after Halidon Hill for the same reasons.

It would seem that constancy was not a highly developed part of the psyche of Lothian landowners in the fIrst half of the fourteenth century, and many historians have been at pains to point this out. Even so, we should avoid being judgmental about complex social situations where there are so many obvious factors to be considered and surely some significant factors of which we have no knowledge at all, or where our understanding is particularly limited. Leadership, both local and national, must surely have had some bearing on military and political affairs. No clear pattern of long-term leadership groups has emerged in this study at either regional or local level.

That should not be taken as evidence that such leadership did not exist, merely that it cannot be incontrovertibly demonstrated by example. If it were possible to chart all of the familial, social, economic, legal and geographic relationships of all the members of the political community of Lothian through the period from 1296 to the 1350s it might well be possible to identify groups with the same, or similar membership entering or leaving the peace of contending authorities, but that would not automatically make clear to us the basis of membership in that group nor that the people concerned really constitute a 'group' at all. Their offIcial admission to Edward's peace on the same day is not evidence that they were necessarily acting in concert, merely that they were included in the same instrument such as the writ of 3 September 1296 instructing the sheriff of Edinburgh to restore the property of Walter de Drylawe and John le Blund among others.

On the occasions that we can genuinely identify a group changing sides70 we might assume that there is a 'common interest' factor involved, but the nature of that relationship is not immediately apparent. Several individuals might come to the peace of Edward I, in the company of this or that prominent person but the nature of the relationship is elusive. The members of the group might be connected by familial relationships, tradition or geographical proximity, but that relationship may not be clear to us. Family connections might be too tenuous to be identified at a distance of 700 years, but sufficiently well-known in the fourteenth century to require no comment.

Traditions of political alignment between family groups might have no real currency, just the product of a friendship/mutual interest in a previous generation; geographical relationships could be obscured by the titles used by specific individuals. Equally, an identified group may represent a political structure of sorts. A great Lord might derive the preponderance of his wealth and power from one region, but he would be very likely to have property in other areas and it is not impossible that the men admitted to the peace of a king in the company of an earl represent the senior tenants of the lordships comprising the property of that earl throughout the country.

Additionally, where we do find a group of people coming to the peace of a king in the company of a great lord it may be the case that they are not particularly aligned with that person in a long-term sense, merely that they have found a means of taking advantage of that lord's prestige to effect changing sides in a relatively painless manner. The lord in question - as long as he was not going to be held responsible for the future conduct of the members of the group - would have his own prestige enhanced by the fact that people were seeking his lordship, perhaps particularly so if those people were not long-term adherents or dependants. When the Earl of Fife came to the peace of Edward Balliol after the battle of Dupplin Muir he brought with him men who were, if not his tenants certainly his neighbours and it is fair to assume that his local prominence was a major factor in their submission.

The relationship between the Earl of Strathearn and the five men who had their lands restored in September 1296, having come to the peace of Edward I in his company, is not so clear - William Byset, a "county" Ragman Roll homager, may have been a dependant of the Earl - through familial relationship, family tradition or on the strength of land tenure. The Earl's interests were not limited to Stratheam, he granted land in the Barony of Balnacreiff in the constabulary of Linlithgow (easily confused with Balencrefe in Haddington constabulary) to John Murray of Drumsergard but the relationship is not readily apparent now, though it may have been abundantly so at the time. William's commitment to the Edwardian cause was sufficient to take him into action at the battle of Falkirk where he had a horse- a hackney valued at eight marks - killed in the fighting. William's service to King Edward may have been the product of the Earl's lordship or leadership, but the extent of lordly control can in any case be exaggerated. In 1304 King Edward found it necessary to order the Earl to prevent his men from supplying the Scottish garrison at Stirling. This was hardly a point where the patriotic star was in the ascendant and the Earl was most certainly in Edward's peace at the time.

While the entire scope of an individual's motivation to fight for either side, or for that matter to avoid as far as possible being involved at all, can hardly be ascertained at a distance of seven centuries, we should have no doubt that personal considerations of a non-political nature could be a significant, even paramount factor in deciding alignment, at least for some people, some of the time. A love match might be enough to carry a person away from the traditional loyalties of their family or region and into the affinity of the other side. Personal career interests might do the same, a factor demonstrated by the

inheritance dispute that arose between the supporters of Edward Balliol in 1334. John Moubray had been killed in action at Annan in 1332 when the Bruce party had surprised Balliol's rather meagre following. Unlike other prominent members of the disinherited, the Moubrays had lost their estates in Scotland, not through war, despite their adherence to the Plantagenet cause before 1314, but through their involvement in the de Soulis conspiracy of 1320, an attempt to place Edward Balliol on the throne.

Evidently the Balliol party was happy to accept defectors from the Bruce party and the Moubrays were prepared to support Edward Balliol but not to the extent of surrendering their individual ambitions for territorial expansion. The Moubrays sought shelter in England and were forfeited by Robert I of a wide range of property, much of which was granted to the Stewart. In August 1334, under the kingship of Edward Balliol, Sir Alexander Moubray claimed John Moubrays estates as the nearest male relative but this was contested by Richard Talbot, Henry Beaumont and David de Strathbogie. According to Bower, these three sought the exclusion of Alexander in favour of the daughters of his late brother, John.

Those members of the disinherited who had been pursuing their lost heritages for rather longer than the Moubrays may have resented Balliol's decision to support their claims, however since the Moubrays had lost their lands in the 1320 attempt to restore the Balliol monarchy (no other credible candidate existed) Edward could hardly avoid offering whatever help he could if he was to be seen as a source of 'good lordship'. These three men that he offended were prominent Balliol supporters. Edward would almost certainly have been unable to mount his invasion of Scotland in the summer of 1332 without their manpower, money and influence. Maintaining even the semblance of Scottish kingship without their active military participation would have been quite impossible since they represented such a large portion of his powerbase.

Despite this - and with the obvious aim of keeping the Moubrays on his side- Edward decided in favour of Sir Alexander. The dissent sown among the three counter-claimants was short-lived because Sir Alexander soon made his own accommodation with the Scots, but the damage to Edward's prestige among his own supporters was probably complemented by damage to his relationship with Edward III. If Edward Balliol could not exert his kingship among his closest associates how successful was he going to be at attracting, and, more importantly, retaining support from the Bruce cause? Edward III may have envisaged a client king, but a client king who could not deliver a stable Scottish administration, or at least containment of the Bruce party, was of very limited value. The defection of Sir Alexander was an indication that the Bruce party was far from being contained.

On the contrary, Moubray had joined them despite the fact that Edward Balliol had taken his part against three men, Beaumont, Strathbogie and Talbot whose support was crucial to the fortunes of the Balliol cause. Edward Balliol's authority was severely undermined because Moubray's defection demonstrated a lack of faith in Edward's ability to form a permanent administration. Defections were not always the product of land disputes: an important motivational factor in several instances was self-evidently the most personal career ambition of all - namely keeping one's head attached to one's neck. David de Strathbogie was - generally - a stalwart supporter of the Balliol cause, but when confronted with the prospect of capture and very possibly death in September 1334 he too defected to the Bruce party and was entrusted with the administration of the north by the Earl of Moray, King David's lieutenant. This begs the question as to why Moray should have been so accommodating. Did he feel that Strathbogie could be trusted to adhere to his new allegiance? Did he feel that confident that he could afford to take a gamble on

that allegiance or was he simply not strong enough to execute Strathbogie out of hand for fear of alienating support in the north? Strathbogie did return to the Balliol party in August 1335. His defection, however temporary, must have been detrimental to the authority of the Plantagenet party, but the reality of his situation must have been clear to Edward Balliol and to Edward III, neither of whom hesitated to accept Strathbogie into their peace. Naturally, not all defections were by such exalted persons, nor is the documentary evidence sufficiently intact to date all such changes of heart. However the restorations and forfeitures that do survive can give us some picture of the regularity with which they occurred.

Geoffrey de Fressingleye, a "county" Ragman Roll homager, would seem to have remained in the peace of the Plantagenets until 1308 but was not forfeited of his property of half the "vill" of Wester Duddingston until February 1312, when he was declared to have been an enemy "for four years". His heir - presumably his son- William, having apparently been in the peace of Edward III was forfeited of the entire "vill" of Duddingston before July 1336. Not only is this an indication of defection, it suggests - at least in the reign of Edward II - a certain reluctance to forfeit people for rebellion. The titles by which people are known to us may well obscure important aspects of their life because our attention is not drawn to those factors. Sir Thomas Randolph can serve as an example of this. As the Earl of Moray it is no surprise to us that he had extensive interests in the north, but his properties elsewhere were hardly insignificant. Each of these landholdings involved Randolph or his representative in the political life of that particular vicinity.

These involvements were not discrete; the value of being able to draw resources from one area to provide armed strength in another can be seen in the force of southern Scots led to Culblean by Sir Andrew Moray. The action was obviously a function of war and politics in the north, but the men on either side were largely 'recruited' from other areas - southern Scots on one side and the retinues of English Lords on the other. This is, in a sense, the direct contradiction of Barron's proposition that the Wars of Independence were conducted by the men of what he saw as 'Celtic' Scotland; he went so far as to state that the 'men of Lothian had neither lot nor part' in the 'nationalist' cause, presumably unaware that Culblean was won by a Scottish army which contained a large body recruited from south of the river Forth.

If political leadership groups are, to say the least, shadowy, what can we say about local military leadership, and can it really be separated from political leadership? Again, although it would seem that such leadership was crucial to the Scottish recoveries after major reverses on the battlefield, the nature of that leadership is just as elusive as political leadership. Certainly there were more and less powerful/influential people in any region we care to examine, but how was that leadership obtained and retained?

The basis for local power might spring from the crown in the form of grants of land or positions of authority in a particular vicinity, but the preservation, development and application of that power would depend, at least in part, on the ability of the lord in question to maintain his prestige and credibility through what would in due course be termed 'good lordship'. In the volatile arena of fourteenth-century political life this would almost inevitably involve military activity from time to time and there is no question but that success in the field could enhance the prestige of great lords and kings, and this was surely reflected at a regional level in the actions of local magnates. Within the Lothian community it is clear that men who would not normally have been of any great consequence on the national political scene could acquire a following, initially through their local network of relatives, friends and neighbours and develop that through their own leadership abilities. In the 1330s William Douglas of Lothian, a minor baron, rose to

prominence through successful leadership in war, amply reported by Fordun and Bower not because of his status in the national political community. A magnate pattern of leadership in Lothian at the same period may not be discernible, but that does not mean it did not exist. Inevitably the political choices of a local potentate must have had some impact, not only on the tenants of those magnates but also on their neighbours.

We might reasonably assume, for instance, that the defection of Patrick Earl of Dunbar to the peace of Edward III after Halidon Hill resulted in a similar change of allegiance among his tenants and neighbours, but the fact that Patrick was specifically granted the properties of any of his tenants that were forfeited by Edward III surely indicates that local leadership was not universally effective in enforcing lordship, or at least that local potentates could be defied. The reversion of Earl Patrick to the Bruce cause might, for all we know, have given him a second opportunity to dispose of tenants, this time those who were unwilling to return to the allegiance of David II. The right to the removal and the forfeitures of free tenants might be construed as no more than an opportunity for the lord concerned to dispose of difficult tenants and reward faithful service or to provide an income for less fortunate dependants through re-granting the forfeited properties.

However, it may indicate a need to make some examples to ensure the future loyalty of the surviving tenants. Whether the Earl of Dunbar was able to benefit from his grant of the forfeitures of his tenants is unclear; his own defection to the Bruce party must surely have effectively prevented him from prosecuting any of his tenants who had joined the Bruces at an earlier date. Local leadership did not have to be limited to tenants however. Neighbouring landowners, regardless of from whom they held their estate would be likely to be influenced by the actions of the most powerful person in their vicinity, particularly in periods of crown weakness.

By the 1330s and 1340s the concentration of local authority in the hands of a small number of trusted lieutenants that had taken place under Robert I had engendered a small class of warlord magnates with enormous power in those localities if only they could effectively exert lordship. That lordship was, in many cases, threatened by the claims of the' disinherited' lords who had lost their lands through their opposition to Robert I and who hoped to regain their lands through their support of Edward Balliol. The competition for authority between the members of these groups was certainly expressed in armed conflict, but it would be short-sighted to assume that they did not actively seek the support of the local political community by less belligerent means, like remissions of rents and casualties, grants of land, office or privilege.

In short, they had to offer 'good lordship' if they were to make themselves secure in their possession of territory. Sir Thomas Grey was of the opinion that Edward III lost his conquest lands in Scotland primarily through a lack of 'good lordship; Sir Thomas did not give any specific examples of this failure, nor did he offer an explanation for its occurrence, but since he was actively involved in both the civil and military aspects of Edward's government we should perhaps accept his opinion. Several prominent lords were forfeited by the Edwardian administration. If these lords were to recover their inheritances they would have to fight, and if they were to fight successfully they must inevitably mobilise troops. These troops might not be raised from the contested areas, but it is difficult to see how a lord could recover his position without a degree of local support, or how they would retain that position without making their authority acceptable to the local community. In the short term that might be effected through force of arms, but to do so indefinitely would be an unacceptable burden on tenants travel from other regions and, in the long term, might well alienate the very people that the lord was endeavouring to bring under his control. Again, Patrick Earl of Dunbar can provide an example of the

practice. When he decided to join the Bruce party, one of the factors that induced his defection was the tendency of troops in Edwardian garrisons, and Berwick in particular, to conduct foraging operations against the local population regardless of which side they were on. Patrick was quite prepared to take this issue to Edward III, but Edward was unable, or perhaps unwilling, to do anything very positive about the problem.

Edward's failure to support Earl Patrick undermined his position as a local magnate insofar as he could not deliver the physical protection of his clients that was part of the responsibility of lordship. The strength of Edward II's garrisons was not great enough to enforce his lordship or protect his clients, but it was sufficient to undermine his only really important ally in the south-east. As the war increasingly favoured the Scots, Earl Patrick's tenants would have been subjected to their demands as well as those of the garrison. If Patrick could not protect his tenants and dependants from the operations of either side he would eventually lose those tenants to a lord who would give them that protection.

Patrick's reversion to the Bruce party was not simply a renouncing of allegiance to Edward III (who, since the ceding to him of 2000 librates of southern Scotland by Edward Ballioe I had been Patrick's liege lord) but an effort to prevent encroachment on his lordship by Scottish lords in the Bruce camp hopeful of extending their influence in the south-east. One could perhaps argue that Patrick had come to the conclusion that he was being damaged more by his absence from the Scottish political community than he was being protected by his presence in the Edwardian political community, which, in a rather grand sense admittedly, is not far removed from the position of the political community of Lothian throughout the period of competition for regal authority.

As long as the Edwardian administration could wield enough strength to prevent extensive Scottish operations in Lothian, most of the community was prepared to accept it, though what choice they had in the absence of effective Scottish military intervention is hard to say. When the Edwardian administrations were too weak to prevent that intervention most of the community accepted the Bruce administration, with what degree of enthusiasm is impossible to say, though Professor Barrow has expressed strong views on the subject. The presence of Lothian men in the ranks of Bruce armies certainly demonstrates that not everyone in Lothian was at ease 'with the Edwardian government, but is hardly proof of widespread opposition to it in the communities between the Avon and Cockburnspath.

The Battle of Dunbar, 3 September 1650.

(Art: Peter Dennis)

CHAPTER FOUR:
COSTS & EXPENSES

The most prestigious form of military obligation was knight service. How exactly knight service was accounted as a financial burden cannot be precisely evaluated. The cost of equipping a first-rate man-at- arms rose dramatically in the latter part of the thirteenth century and must have become an almost intolerable burden for smaller landholders whose estates would hardly be sufficient to support the man- at-arms and his horse let alone discharge the debt incurred if the man were captured and had to find a ransom.

The cost of knight service was not, however, a fixed universal sum. A suitable mount might easily cost as much as £30,95 but even a cursory glance at the horse valuation rolls in CDS indicates that for the vast majority of men-at-arms a beast with a value of £5-10 was the norm. The same applies to the equipment. Suits of chainmail referred to in contemporary documents are valued at anything from 20 shillings to 100 shillings. Obviously this is a reflection of the value of the individual hauberk. At the lower end of the price spectrum the hauberk would consist of relatively large links, perhaps a centimetre or more in diameter and the gauge of the metal itself only one millimetre thick. The protective value of such a hauberk would have been very limited compared to one with links of only five or six millimetres diameter.

The cost of a hauberk was not simply dependent on the size and density of the links, but was also, obviously, a reflection of the extent of the protection. A coat of mail that extended to the knee and with long sleeves terminating in chainmail mittens would inevitably be a more costly item than one of similar quality that only reached to the waist and elbows. Self evidently, assuming a similar quality of link, the latter would comprise many more links than the former; possibly the difference between 15-20,000 links and 30-40,000 links. The single most important cost factor was whether the mail links were butted or riveted. In butted mail the individual links are passed through one another and the ends of each link simply meet or slightly overlap rather like a modem washer.

The more expensive variety- riveted mail- was a much more labour intensive product. Each link is firmly closed by one or sometimes two tiny rivets Chainmail is still being hand-made in India to-day for the film and re-enactment market, and the price relationship between the two forms (for the same size of hauberk) is approximately 2.5:1 in favour of riveted mail. Given that the method of assembly has not changed in the intervening seven hundred years it would seem unreasonable, failing specific evidence to the contrary, to assume that that relationship was radically different in the fourteenth century, although the 'real price' in relation to incomes was far greater than it is today due to the lower price of the metal itself and the availability of suitable wire to cut into links.

The protective power of chainmail by itself was quite limited. As a guard against an edged weapon mail was quite effective, indeed mail gloves are still sometimes used by butchers, but mail offered little protection against the impact of a blow, thus, to protect the wearer from broken bones the mail hauberk was worn with a thickly padded garment (jack, gambeson) to diffuse impact. Non-metal protection had the advantage of being relatively cheap; it could be made locally by men and women without developing a high level of skills and from materials that were to be found easily in any community- linen, wool and leather.

Open Rebellion.

Artwork: Peter Dennis

Some proportion of the munitions used in Scotland was imported from the Low Countries, possibly the majority of it, but this cannot be adequately demonstrated. Certainly some came either directly from England or indirectly as re-exported goods from England via Ireland if we are to accept the repeated demands of English kings that their subjects refrain from trading arms to the Scots as evidence that such legislation was necessary. Whether these imports constituted the mainstay of Scottish armies is a different matter. Any type of medieval weaponry could be manufactured locally.

As early as William the Lion's reign a man held property in Perth in exchange for two iron helmets and one Perth tradesman (possibly the same man) was specifically described as a galeator: a helmet maker. If helmet making could be a full-tinle, or at least primary, occupation, it would seem reasonable to assume that Perth tradesmen could provide any personal military equipment that the local community might require, and that the same would apply in Edinburgh, Stirling or any other sizable burgh. Since a helmet is as hard, or harder, to produce than any other piece of armour it follows that all the necessary appurtenances of knightly combat were available in a town like Perth. Whether the local producers could meet the demands of entire armies is another matter. It seems reasonable to conclude that the Scots imported arms, not because they could not be produced locally, but because they could not be produced in sufficient quantity, or, after a particularly heavy defeat such as Falkirk because lost equipment could not be replaced quickly.

Before the close of the thirteenth century the sword had ceased to be the primary weapon of battle even for dismounted men-at-arms. A body of men equipped with spears could face cavalry with some degree of confidence compared to a similar body bearing only swords. The sword of course was much more practical for individual combat than the spear, but the development of better quality armour, and in particular the growing practice of adding protective plates on top of and eventually in place of mail reduced its effectiveness in fighting between men at arms.

The net result was the increasing popularity of pole-arms and mace, hammer and axe type weapons which could reasonably be expected to break or penetrate even the strongest plates if the wielder could achieve a clean blow on his enemy, or at least to cause internal injuries- including broken bones- with a less than perfect strike. The sword was retained because of its convenience as a side arm for personal defence outwith operational conditions- criminal assaults and disorder- and because of its social significance as the weapon of gentlemen.

CHAPTER FIVE: THE HORSE

No man-at-arms could serve properly without a suitable horse; so much so that records of garrison complements mention not only the lack of horses but sometimes that a particular animal was 'insufficient'. Dr. Ayton has demonstrated that most mounts in Scotland were valued at substantially more than the 100s (£5) which was generally the minimum value of horse acceptable for restauro assessment. It is almost axiomatic that Scottish medieval armies were almost devoid of cavalry due to the difficulty of maintaining suitable mounts through the winter. However the very extensive level of man-at-arms service performed by Lothian men for Plantagenet governments would indicate that such animals were reasonably readily available and that there were men competent to serve on horseback suggests that the availability of horses was not a product of the campaign of 1296. The evolutions of medieval armies were extremely basic, but the quality of horsemanship necessary for the individual to function competently on the battlefield would have been very high indeed, a level of skill that would be impossible to achieve without the appropriate mount.

The limited amount of archaeological evidence relating to the horse in Scotland- skeletal remains and horse furniture- would seem to indicate that short, thickset animals of 12-14 hands were the norm. However, virtually all of the data comes from urban excavations. Since only a very small portion (perhaps 10% at most) of medieval Scots lived in urban areas we should be very careful in our application of the material gathered.

There should be no doubt that the majority of animals across the country were short enough that today they would be described as ponies rather than horses, but the number of Scottish men who performed mounted military service in Edwardian garrisons surely suggests that there was a high enough incidence of ownership of horses fit for such duties for the society to be able to furnish competent cavalry soldiers in sufficient numbers to justify the effort of administering the necessary records of service. A number of these men were given the use of one of the king's horses to carry out their duties, but that is not a particularly good indicator that such horses were not readily available to Scots. It could just as easily be the case that these individuals could not afford to buy- or just as importantly maintain- a horse of that calibre, or simply that they had already lost their own horse and had the use of one from the king as a temporary measure, pending the wardrobe paying out for a replacement, or that they have been provided with a horse 'by gift of the king'. This might be on account of good service in the past or perhaps for personal reasons with no particular relevance to historians, but no doubt it was chiefly to ensure that the king's army was not deprived of the service of an adequate man-at-arms.

The height of a horse did not determine its usefulness for war. Recent research suggests that the great war horses of the early fourteenth century - when body armour for the battlefield was at its heaviest - were rather shorter than traditionally believed, perhaps closer to fifteen hands than seventeen, and that the advantage of these horses over other breeds lay more in their greater endurance than in superior speed or stature. Mounted combat in great engagements- although still the preferred arena for deeds of chivalry- was extremely rare in the more mundane forms of activity that were more typical of campaigning - reconnaissance, raiding, counter-raiding, convoy, and what we might call operations in support of the civil power- the chief function of the horse was to move troops from A to B and back again. For both sides this would often mean traversing difficult terrain. Scots operating an insurgent strategy from inaccessible strongholds would have to cross such terrain in order to reach objectives, and the Edwardian garrison troops would have to negotiate it if they were to attack the Scots in their camps or pursue them after incursions. To conduct these operations both sides would have had to make use of cheap, sturdy horses that would not be a huge loss if they were lost- they needed animals that could be replaced readily and locally; more mounted infantry nags rather than knightly chargers. Nonetheless, there was still a place for the great horse.

There are a number of instances of what we might think of as 'classic' knightly fighting; actions like Dunbar, Roslin and Methven where the *schwelpunkt* of the engagement was the meeting of mounted men-at-arms. These fights, and the tournaments that took place in the later phases of the wars, were the arena in which the 'destrier' horses were a necessary part of a gentleman's equipment. The Scots enjoyed a number of successes in mounted combat and in tournaments, and it is therefore hard to accept the traditional view that the Scots did not have access to heavy cavalry horses. Certainly it is true that the Scots could not raise such large forces of men-at- arms as the English or the French, but then, Scotland was a rather smaller country, and the maintenance of a heavy war horse would be likely to have been a rather greater burden simply because of the relative poverty of the Scottish nobility and gentry. There are enough instances of mounted Scottish men-at-arms in action throughout the entire period of the Wars of Independence to demonstrate that they were a crucial part of the Scottish approach to war generally, and

since it would seem that at least one in three of the men sampled served as men-at-arms, it is impossible to avoid the conclusion that heavy cavalry service was a normal practice for Lothian gentlemen.

The extent to which Scottish chargers were armoured is open to question. However there is no evidence to suggest that Scottish men-at-arms were equipped to a lower standard than their English counterparts. In 1299 the Balliol party, under the leadership of John Comyn and Robert Bruce, stationed a force under Sir Robert Keith and Sir Ingram d'Umfraville, in Ettrick Forest to harass the English. In addition to the local men the force consisted of 1500 infantry and one hundred men-at-arms with covered (barbed, barded or armoured) horses. It would be very unlikely that the Scots would commit a very substantial part of their armoured cavalry to operations in a forest, or that they would select that force primarily from the men with covered horses or indeed to commit them to operations that did not involve the higher commanders. As we have already seen, receipt of full man-at-arms wages in English armies and garrisons was dependent on possession of adequate horse armour. If it was normal for Scots on unarmoured horses to fight garrison members on armoured ones it would be likely that patriotic Scottish chroniclers would have made the point repeatedly to underline the military achievements of their countrymen.

A comparison of the valuations of the horses of Scottish men-at-arms in Edwardian garrisons with those of their English counterparts would seem to suggest that they might, in the main, have owned somewhat cheaper animals, but this is hardly conclusive since so large a proportion of the men named in valuations cannot be adequately identified as Scots or English. Even if we could demonstrate that a 'typical' Scottish man-at-arms (and how would we decide what was typical?) serving in a particular garrison was less expensively mounted than an English man-at-arms, we would not have proven that this was a universal, or even commonplace condition. The valuations are not in themselves a good guide to the quality of horseflesh available to Scottish men-at-arms; only a record of the animals they took on active service. Superficially it might seem that a man-at-arms would inevitably choose to take a powerful, perhaps prestigious animal on campaign. Englishmen coming to serve in Scotland would presumably take their expensive charger in the expectation of taking part in a conventional chivalrous fight - and that is obviously going to be the animal they have valued, lest it be lost in action. Scotsmen, with a clearer picture of local conditions (and perhaps able to send home for a different mount should they need it) may have elected not to expose their more valuable animals to the hazards of daily military service or to risk the animal's health by keeping it in a crowded stable.

CHAPTER SIX: OPERATIONAL PRACTICE

Although tactical analysis with such limited data is of questionable validity at the best of times it is worth giving some consideration to the composition of the armies from what we know of combat. The dependence on men-at-arms as the striking force of Edwardian garrisons is evident from the muster rolls - generally half or more of the entire combatant strength. Where the balance of the garrison includes archers, particularly crossbowmen, it is reasonable to assume that their usual function would be to maintain the security of the establishment, not to march across the country. Equally, it is reasonable to assume that the main function of retaining a large force of men-at-arms at Linlithgov, or Edinburgh, was to carry the war to the enemy. The strategic value of cavalry lay primarily in their ability to conduct operations at a greater distance from their base and return without too much risk of interception by a more balanced force and the strong likelihood of being able to escape from such an interception should it occur. The tactical advantage lay in the ability to deploy directly to combat from line-of-march. At its simplest, the Scots needed to be able to achieve local superiority in men-at-arms over the parties that could be committed by the

garrison forces. The key phrase is, of course, local superiority. It would not be necessary for the Scots to maintain a larger force of men-at-arms than the total English deployment. They would require only as many as would be needed to deter the English force in a particular vicinity at a particular time and to do so on enough occasions to achieve local tactical dominance, at which point the garrison would no longer be able to fulfill its administrative functions for the government and probably start to be seriously at risk of capture by the Scots due to the difficulties of maintaining a fortress in enemy territory.

The majority of the infantry in garrison service were archers or crossbowmen usually receiving 3d or 4d per day and presumably not engaged in offensive operations to any great degree. This may not have been the case in the Edinburgh garrison of 1340 when half of the complement consisted of men-at-arms and the remainder mounted archers. It is possible that these particular "mounted archers" were in fact foot archers receiving a preferential rate of pay for service in a very exposed stronghold or that the garrison establishment had been changed to conform to developments in English military thinking in the 1330s.

The trend toward forces consisting mostly, if not entirely, of men-at-arms and mounted archers has been thoroughly examined by Dr. Ayton and Col. Rogers and a lengthy discussion of that trend here is neither necessary nor desirable, suffice to say that it is widely recognised. There is no reason to assume that Scotland was a military backwater in the 1330s; the rationale that lay behind the adoption of a force that was completely mounted but retaining some of the advantages of dismounted troops - primarily the 'firepower' aspect - was as viable in Scotland as it was in France. One muster roll document is a very slender basis for analysis of a garrison that existed for some years. It may have been the case that archers in previous years had been provided with horses, but that the documents recording those animals, assuming that they were documented at all, have failed to survive. It is also possible that the weak position of the Plantagenet cause in Lothian in 1340 had prompted the government to pay for or even provide a horse for every man in the event of the garrison having to make a hasty withdrawal.

Dr. Polwicke was fIrmly convinced that there was no articulated system of knight service in Scotland, Professor Barrow is equally convinced that there was, though neither has been particularly clear about what exactly they mean by an 'articulated system’; Certainly the incidence of knight service obligations for land under Robert I would hardly have produced a cavalry force of more than a few hundred from the who Ie of Scotland, but we should bear in mind that the majority of records which tell us anything at all about combat in the fourteenth century refer repeatedly to the service of Scottish men-at-arms; we read of them in English garrisons, we read of them fighting at Dunbar, Roslin, Edinburgh Castle, Culblean and Crichtondene.

At Dunbar it is clear that only heavy cavalry elements were engaged on either side. It is often assumed that the entirety of the Scottish cavalry were present; however there is no evidence to suggest that this is the case, but there is evidence that a considerable party of Scottish men-at-arms were in the garrison of Dunbar castle. Whilst recognising that the Scottish leadership was inexperienced in war, it would be unreasonable to assume that the whole of the Scottish cavalry, the striking arm of the army, would be constituted as a single formation for any purpose other than as part of a general engagement let alone detached from the army as a raiding force. Even if we assume that men might choose to join an operation without the sanction, or even against the direct orders of their superiors, we can hardly assume that all of the men-at-arms in the army were either disobedient or so very keen to come to blows with the enemy. All the same, it is clear that defeat at Dunbar and the subsequent surrender of the castle was a blow sufficient to deter the Scots from any of

earnest resistance for the rest of the summer and the balance of King John's army disintegrated. By 1300 the Scottish military effort had recovered itself sufficiently that Edward I thought it worthwhile fortifying Berwick and the man-at-arms element had recovered to the extent that Sir Thomas Grey could write of “great passages of arms between the marches and notably in Teviotdale, before Roxburgh castle…”

The fight at Roslin was unquestionably an encounter between men-at-arms. The Scots approached from Biggar, surprised the main body of the enemy in a night attack and regrouped in time to attack and defeat another part of the force. Grey tells us that the English expedition was made in 'great strength', but fails to make clear what he means by that. There are two distinct possibilities. Grey may mean that the English force comprised a large body of men-at-arms; the numbers involved would be unlikely to be very large; hundreds perhaps rather than thousands, but the significance of their defeat would be considerable since they would be regarded as an elite formation as well as the more direct military significance of a demonstration that the English could not rely on Lothian as a secure area nor on the ability of their men-at-arms to dominate their Scottish equivalents in battle. Alternatively, if Segrave led a more conventional force of horse and foot, it would suggest that in the absence of the man-at-arms element, already defeated by the Scots, the balance of the army would not be safe in open country and should be obliged to withdraw for fear of further defeat.

Sir Thomas describes two other fights of men-at-arms during the same period at Cupar, when his father was the constable of the castle there, an indication that such activity was not limited to Lothian, but a normal practice of war in Scotland. The English expedition of 1322, which penetrated as far as Edinburgh, was seriously hampered by the activity of the Scottish cavalry. Although Grey does not describe any actions in Lothian he makes it clear that the hobelars of the English army were prevented from foraging. The implication is that the Scots could counter English cavalry forces adequately and that the English therefore had lost the reconnaissance battle to a degree that prevented any worthwhile degree of operational activity. Grey tells us that the English army was consistently harassed by the Scots during the retreat to Newcastle, a further indication that the Scots could deploy fast and powerful columns which could disengage easily if threatened by a concentration of the enemy.

It is difficult to imagine what kind of force could have fulfilled such a role other than one with a high proportion of men-at-arms. Incidental comments from Grey give us further pointers to the existence of a chivalrous or armigerous class. The participation of Scottish magnates in jousts is unremarkable but the description of a Scottish lord as a 'banneret' is a strong indication that the structures of the Scottish armigerous classes were at least broadly similar to those in England. The social niceties of fourteenth-century war were practised in Lothian as they might be anywhere else, which is to say intermittently, and no doubt with due regard to political realities. The Earl of Moray pursued a force under the Count of Naruur from Burghmuir (at least) to the ruins of Edinburgh castle, a distance of at least two miles, in 1335. Contemporary accounts indicate a fight primarily, if not exclusively, between men-at-arms. Bower particularly draws attention to a combat which resulted in the two combatants (one of them female) simultaneously spearing one another. While this is further evidence of the importance of men-at-arms generally, the outcome of the fight demonstrates a willingness to make the sort of grand chivalrous gesture that could enhance a man's reputation as a noble warrior. Moray elected to release the Count of Naruur free of ransom on condition that he would never bear arms against David II. Escorting his prisoner to English-held territory, Moray had the misfortune to be captured himself and spent some years as a prisoner of war. Moray could afford to make a generous gesture and release Namur because Naruur was not really a militarily

or politically significant figure, though he was probably famous enough that his capture and release would be noted.

Moray on the other hand was a military leader of some talent and a major figure in the Bruce party. The presence or otherwise of the count of Naruur and his hundred men-at-arms in the English army would have made very little difference to Scots militarily. Their release would have helped to establish or maintain the status of the Scots as members of a pan-European chivalrous class, whereas the removal of Moray was a severe material blow. However chivalrous Moray's gesture may have been, it was also a political device, though one that backfired. The literature of the day is not, of course, a secure guide to the general nature of the war, only to the parts of the conflict in which the 'writers were interested.

This is particularly true of Grey and Barbour. Each was predominantly concerned with the actions of men-at-arms. Even where Barbour refers to courageous acts by common men like Thorn Dicson or William Bunnock, we might consider the possibility that Barbour uses their stories as a device to encourage the chivalric confidence of his audience by implying that the Scottish commons were braver and more independent than most, and therefore needed particularly the lords and knights to lead them. These 'middling men' seem to seldom, if ever, act on their ovm initiative, but they could be motivated by their leaders, not only to join the action themselves, but to encourage others, thus Thomas Dicson in Book 5 of *The Bruce*:

'Sa wrocht he throu sutelte

That all the lele men of that land

That with his fadyr were dwelland

This gud man gert cum ane and ane

And mak him manrent everilkane,'

If Barbour and Grey concentrate on the men-at-arms, it is quite probable that they do so, not only because of their own social status, but because the bulk of the operational activity was in fact conducted by rather modest formations consisting primarily or even exclusively of heavy cavalry. This cannot be assumed for the action at Crichtondene as described by John of Fordun. A force was raised in the north of England to raise the Scots siege of Edinburgh castle. The operation was successful in intent in that the siege was raised, but the Scots elected to confront the relief column, meeting them between Clerkington and Crichton. The relief column may not have included a strong contingent of men-at-arms, but it would have been a very unusual structure for an English raiding party if it did not. Equally the Scottish force may not have had a force of men-at-arms, but it would be very unlikely for a force without a strong cavalry element to attempt to intercept and outmaneuvered an enemy that they would at least expect to have a plentiful supply of men-at-arms in keeping with the normal usage of the day.

The Scots won the day and then threatened to move on into England, obliging the English force to remain under arms south of the Tweed for two days until the Scots moved away. Again, though we are not told of the nature of the force, it would be very unusual for any raiding party not to include a significant proportion of men-at-arms In addition to the literary and administrative records relating to the service of men-at-arms there are many examples of men receiving prisoner of war allowances appropriate for that status or of being forfeited for their service to the Bruce cause. In the sample of less

than 300 Lothian men, an absolute minimum of over 100 can be unquestionably identified as giving man-at-arms service. Given the scarcity of documents we can surely be confident that the real figure would be somewhat greater.

Whether this is proof of an articulated system of knight service is not the issue, the question is whether or not the Scots were able to field and maintain a force of heavy cavalry adequate to their needs. Undoubtedly on the few occasions that large field armies met the English cavalry force was superior in quantity and perhaps quality, hardly surprising given the disparity in size and economic conditions between the two countries. Large actions certainly could determine the immediate progress of the war and tend to receive a disproportionate amount of attention, but they were very few and far between. Stirling, Falkirk, Bannockburn, Myton, Dupplin Muir, Halidon Hill and Neville's Cross were all very significant events, but the several recoveries of the Bruce cause were to a considerable extent achieved in lengthy campaigns of small actions and it would be difficult to argue that the brunt of the fighting was not borne by men-at-arms.

Before leaving this topic some observations must be made about general military service as envisaged by Robert I's legislation of 1318. 128 The obligations on the individual are quite clearly defined: men whose possessions were equal in value to a cow were obliged to find themselves a spear or a bow with arrows, men with goods to the value of £10 a rather more comprehensive list of equipment. Professor Duncan has made the point that simply to value the cow - about 10s - hides the fact that poorer men saw money so rarely that they would have assessed their goods in terms of cattle-values.

One has to question the validity of this, certainly in relation to Lothian, which was already a highly monetarised society by the close of the thirteenth century. However the relative scarcity of specie in other parts of the country may have made cattle-values an effective 'common denominator' of wealth. Obviously this part of the legislation was not aimed at providing the king with a force of trained, competent men that he could lead in an offensive campaign, but at raising large forces when required to meet invaders. The threshold of goods to the value of half a cow was very low indeed, and while vve should recognise that there was undoubtedly a class of people too poor to own even that much, we should also recognise that the bulk of the adult male population probably did have goods to that value. However conscripting large numbers of these men for any length of time would have economic implications - who would tend the fields if these men were on campaign?

The position of the man with goods to the value of £10 is, if anything, less clear than that of his poorer neighbour. His £10 of goods obliged him to acquire a bacinet, an aketon, armoured gloves, sword and lance. Failing the aketon, he was to have a haubergel with a 'good iron for his body'. The legislation does not make clear what is meant by the terms aketon and haubergel; obviously there was an intention to differentiate between two different forms of protection. Haubergel is a diminutive form of the word 'hauberk' (a chainmail shirt), generally perceived as leather or cloth armour, a perception supported by the phrase 'with a good iron'. The 'good iron' may refer to a small round cap but it may be a description of an early form of what would later be called a brigandine; the practice of inserting or attaching iron plates to cloth and leather armour was hardly a novelty in 1318. Unfortunately the term aketon is very often used to describe much the same thing.

There are two distinct possibilities here. Either aketon was used to denote an alternative type of armour - which could hardly be anything other than chainmail - or that aketon and haubergel were generally understood as terms for different forms of essentially the same sort of product. Though there is no obvious reason why medieval legislators

should have thought the distinction desirable or necessary, they evidently did think it necessary, and presumably with good cause, so perhaps we should assume that the aketon and bacinet was seen as the more desirable choice, but that a haubergel with 'a good iron' was considered an adequate substitute. With the addition of his 'cyrotecas de guerra' (gloves of war), the £10 man was equipped to the sort of standard to be expected of line of battle infantry in France or England, but the legislation is unclear about what exactly constituted a £10 man, nor do we know if King Robert's law was in the nature of a definition of customary practice or an attempt to broaden the range of men liable to provide service at a certain standard.

Are we to assume that those who owned less than £10 of goods had no more obligation than those with one cow's worth? This would seem to be unusually lenient to men with £9 a year and it surely cannot mean that men with £100 a year were no more heavily burdened than those with a tenth of that income. The division into two groups for military purposes might suggest that the only equipment scales of medieval Scots were those of the impoverished peasant archer/spearmen or of the heavy infantry with aketon and bacinet, yet we can easily identify large amounts of man-at-anus service being discharged in and around Lothian or by Lothian men in virtually every year from 1296 at Dunbar to Neville's Cross in 1346. Should we therefore assume that knight and man-at-arms service was not affected by the 1318 law? Certainly anyone performing man-at-arms service would have to have rather better equipment than that envisaged in the legislation, though if the 'aketon' of the act implies a chainmail shirt, the additional equipment required for man-at-anus service might not have been a very heavy investment.

The legislation makes no reference to a shield or to leg protection or to a horse, but most men of property would already own an adequate horse and a perfectly adequate shield could be manufactured by any half way competent carpenter. Given that a chainmail shirt could be had for anything from twenty to one hundred shillings it would be reasonable to estimate leggings at two to twenty-five shillings a pair depending on size, quality and degree of 'tailoring'. A significant sum to a man with goods worth £10 perhaps, but not a very heavy one. If, as seems reasonable to assume, the category extended up to £10, rather than from £10 upward, the cost of 'upgrading' equipment and the upkeep or acquisition of a suitable horse would of course represent a very significant investment for men at the lower end of the wealth scale. For men at the top of that scale acquiring the extra equipment (and skills) might actually have been a means of potentially improving one's status in the community.

If a man were equipped to serve with the men-at-arms he would undoubtedly be welcome to do so both in Scottish armies where men-at-arms must have been at a premium and in English garrisons where there were frequently recruiting problems and where there must surely have been a desire to have as many members of the local community as possible and encourage commitment to Plantagenet lordship. Serving with the men-at-arms would bring a man into more contact with men who could offer him patronage and advancement than serving 'with the infantry. The act must surely have been concerned with the provision of a large army to conduct or resist invasion, a relatively rare event generally, and particularly so in Lothian. Given that year on year the bulk of the fighting would seem to have been done by men-at-arms, the significance of the legislation may have been rather limited. To the best of our knowledge Scottish men-at-arms served for land tenure obligations. The precise extent of their armament was not defined, but they, and their superior, were aware of what was required of them. The equipment required would not have been cheap, but it need not have been terribly expensive either. An aketon or haubergel could be made domestically, a spear might cost

3d to 6d, and Edward II (in 1302-3, when he was still Prince of Wales) spent 20s on three bacinets on a pair of plate gloves. Presumably the bacinets were for members of his retinue, and therefore probably were of a good quality and high price. Edward would hardly be likely to buy the cheapest items available, so it is a safe assumption that these things could be purchased for rather less than the sums he paid.

It is likely that in the early fourteenth century the Scottish '£10 man' could equip himself for less than £2, and possibly even less than £1 bearing in mind that Edward's plate gloves would have been very much more costly than a pair of leather mittens with chainmail, or even just very thick, rigid leather attached to the backs. If £10 represented the upper limit of income scale relative to equipment scale we would have to ask why that figure should be selected and what are the implications for our perception of military service among men of greater financial standing? It may be more realistic to regard the requirements of the 1318 legislation as a means of setting a standard for all the men whose goods had a value that lay between 'a cow' and £10. In that case the cost of equipment would have been a real burden on the man whose goods were valued at one or two pounds, but not an impossible one; it was not, after all, a man's income that was the qualifying factor, but his goods.

Landholder status was apparently not a factor and there is no way of knowing what sort of income could be expected from any particular property on the basis of the rental paid. However the military obligations implicit in William the Lion's grant to his sister - one hundred librates of land in the baronies of Ratho and Bathgate infeft with twenty knights - would suggest that man-at-arms service could be expected from men with tenure of land worth £5 per annum in the early thirteenth century. Obligations may have changed, of course, but the rather conservative nature of medieval societies generally would militate against this. The financial obligations of heritable tenants remained static, there is no reason to think that military ones altered in principle, though the regularity with which due services were demanded was presumably much greater in the fourteenth century. Of the properties forfeited by Bruce partisans in Lothian in l335-36, over seventy were valued at £5 or more, with a high incidence of rentals at £5 (more usually described as 100s) in the Bathgate and Ratho area; possibly revealing the structure of the estates granted by William the Lion to his sister Ada. We might reasonably suppose that the majority of these forfeitures, at least of the men, were the result of performing army service for the Bruce cause.

Most of the men with more than £10 in goods would have had defined military obligations attached to land tenure, but by the close of the thirteenth century there was already a well-established mercantile class in Scottish towns and they were - vicissitudes of war excepted - increasingly wealthy. Although no known Edinburgh burgess can be positively identified performing man-at-arms service before John, we should not assume that wealthy burgh residents, only a small proportion of whom were actually burgesses, did not perform that service by long standing tradition. If foreign merchants could be obliged to acquire arms and armour and give service at Berwick, it is hard to see holy local men of similar standing could avoid doing the same. Burgh men were of course obliged to serve in the defense of their town should the need arise. However, the defense of a town with no walls was hardly worth attempting in the face of a field army. Since neither Edinburgh, Haddington nor Linlithgow had town walls, the actual discharge of that obligation must have been rare (to say the least), but burgh men were called out to serve in the field like anyone else.

To what extent army service could be drawn from Lothian obviously depended to a great degree on who was demanding the service and who held the reins of government,

and how firmly. Professor Barrow has demonstrated clearly that a sizable proportion of the tenants of Coldinghamshire were forfeited by Edward I for fighting for the Balliol cause at Falkirk, and we should not doubt that Lothian men also served there, though whether Wallace was able to raise the level of manpower actually due from Lothian is very doubtful.

The garrison at Edinburgh and the alignment of the Earl of Dunbar with Edward I must have discouraged some and many must have doubted both the potential of Wallace to defeat the English and the validity of his cause. John's abdication may have been forced, but it was not necessarily invalid from a legal perspective since he had sworn allegiance to Edward I in 1291-92. Additionally, a number of Lothian barons and free tenants were either in Edward's peace or his prisons. In the absence of several men who would normally have had recruitment and/or leadership responsibilities it would surely have proved difficult to call upon the 'service that every man owes for his head' very effectively; there would inevitably be doubts about who was responsible for ensuring enlistment from their baronies and properties and about the validity of their authority. It is of course quite impossible to make any detailed assessment of the size of the army of Lothian had it been available to Wallace in its entirety.

Professor Duncan has drawn attention to a sixteenth-century wappinschaw at which the 'army of Annandale' numbered rather more than 1,000 men and makes the case that the fourteenth-century equivalent would have been of much the same size, and indeed Edward I would seem to have expected that 1,000 men could be raised by the earl of Carrick in 1297. We can hardly think that the 'army of Lothian' would be any smaller, in fact almost certainly rather larger given the presence of one of the largest towns on the country, Edinburgh, and several smaller towns and nucleated villages large enough to support markets; not a notable feature of medieval Carrick. Men with Lothian connections were certainly recruited for the campaign that resulted in Neville's Cross, but probably not in the numbers we might expect for a general obligation like a wappinschaw. In the event of a general call-out the labouring men of the community - those with goods worth a cow or more anyway - were required to serve, but an expeditionary force would be more likely to include a larger proportion of men selected for service, men who had, or at least were expected to have, adequate arms and armour.

Formulary E, no. 59, contains an instruction for raising troops from the burgh of 'A' - possibly Ayr. The order requires one hundred and twenty men 'armed for fighting' and six men 'sufficiently armed' (perhaps 'appropriately' or 'properly' armed) to be their leaders. The document is from a formulary and cannot be assumed to be typical of the reality of enlistments, also it refers to Ayrshire- not Lothian- all the same it is probably fair to assume that an enlistment of the order of 120 with arms men and six men with 'sufficient' armour would not have been an unrealistic expectation for the town. The fact that there is a provision for leadership, like the archers from Bowden and their 'armed man' or the two men said by Bower to be 'leaders of the archers', is a further indication that there was some understanding of the need for people who could fill 'junior leader' roles to aid the articulation of the army.

It is also clear from two documents that the crown identified two different levels of obligation on men of the same community. Those who had, or could be provided with, weapons and those required to provide themselves with 'sufficient' armour in *Formulary E* and the men with goods to the value of a cow and men with goods to the value of £10 in the 1318 legislation. Neither document defines the service of men with military tenure presumably because each of those tenures was a specific contract between tenant and superior. Men holding land for defined military service still had the universal burden of army service for the state, but would be expected to present themselves for service in the same role as that envisaged in their land grant, which, for most of them at least, would be that of a man-at-arms.

CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCLUSIONS

LANDHOLDERS AND GOVERNMENT

In a broad sense, the political community of Lothian would seem to have carried much the same range of responsibilities and privileges as their counterparts in England, with similar obligations of court and military service. The local political community formed part of the administrative fabric of the country as jurors, as military leaders, as specialist combatants and, in some cases, as barons with judicial responsibilities additional to their duties to the sheriff court.

To retain the family property, and the privileges attendant on landholding, each member of the political community had to achieve and maintain a positive relationship with whichever party was in a position to exert lordship in the sheriffdom. During most of the period between 1296 and 1314 it is very clear that the Plantagenet administration was effective in Lothian, and the very small number of Lothian landholders forfeited in 1306 and 1312 suggests that the overwhelming majority of the Lothian political community were prepared to accept Plantagenet lordship.

Traditionally, that acceptance has been seen by both English and Scottish historians as evidence that the nobility were, by and large anyway, less than enthusiastic about Scottish independence and Scottish kingship and far more interested in retaining their family properties, including, of course, lands in England. Since the maintenance (or improvement) of the status of one's family and the protection of their rights was the primary duty of any landholder it is hardly surprising that they should have accepted

Plantagenet lordship when the alternative would h ave been going to war in support of a kingship that had failed to maintain the independence of the kingdom (the Balliol cause in 1296-1304) or of one that had yet to establish itself as a credible source of authority (the Bruce cause in 1306-1314). Service was inevitable, but not wholly undesirable. The military service performed by Lothian men, both as garrison men-at-arms and for landholding, contributed to the security of the administration, providing some degree of social, political and economic stability through the sheriffdom. This was not simply a matter of combat strength or effectiveness in the field. Even after Robert I had gained the military ascendancy and control of most of Scotland he ,vas unable to penetrate Lothian to any great extent, though he was able to draw blackmail in exchange for truces. Had the Lothian administration not had the military power to resist him, Robert would have had no need to offer truces, and it is extremely unlikely that the administration could have fielded an adequate force of men at arms to offer any realistic level of resistance to the Bruce party if it had not been able to call upon the service of Lothian landholders.

The discharge of military obligation to the government was inevitable if landholders were going to retain their positions, but is not really a good guide to their political inclinations. Certainly it is a good indicator of the current and overt allegiance of an individual, but that should not be construed as evidence of political belief any more than paying income tax today is an indicator of support for the party in government. So long as the Plantagenets could offer good lordship Lothian men had good cause to fulfill their obligations and keep on the right side of the government of the day, thus helping to keep the war out of Lothian. That level of acceptance was not universal in Lothian. A number

Left: Robert the Bruce in Clan Regalia.

Overleaf: The earliest known depiction of the Battle of Bannockburn in 1314, from a 1440s manuscript of Walter Bower's Scotichronicon

handful more in 1312. The majority of the political community surely continued to gIve their service to the administrations of Edward I and Edward II, or the lists of forfeitures would have been much longer, as would be the case in 1335-7.

By 1314 the Plantagenet administration had held power in Lothian for the better part of twenty years and would seem to have been quite "fIrmly established; sufficiently so that despite the fall of Linlithgow and Edinburgh to the Scots, a number of Lothian men served Edward II at Bannockburn. This indicates some level of confidence in the Plantagenet cause, though of what nature and to what extent is open to question. The men concerned may have believed the Bruce cause to be unreasonable in itself or just unrealizable in the face of concerted English opposition. They may have considered it inevitable that the English would win a major battle and restore their power in Scotland and that they should therefore continue in Plantagenet peace as the better prospect in the long run.

Any strong popular support for the Plantagenets would not seem to have endured after Bannockburn, and Robert I seems to have had no difficulty in exerting lordship in Lothian thereafter. This does not mean that he was in any sense king through popular acclaim there, rather that, like the Plantagenets before him, his power was sufficiently evident to discourage opposition. The Bruce party had become the government of the day, and, like the Plantagenets, so long as they could afford good lordship to the community, particularly in regard to keeping war out of Lothian, they could reasonably expect to retain power.

It might be argued that the Bruce party, like the Plantagenets, were acceptable to the community as they provided good government, and that the political community of Lothian were content to accept their lordship until after Halidon Hill (Edward Balliol's brief reign in 1332 does not seem to have had any real significance in Lothian) at which point they were content to accept Plantagenet lordship as they or their predecessors had a generation before. The situations were not the same however. The high incidence of forfeiture that occurred by 1335-67 has no counterpart in the reigns of Edward II, and though the large number of restorations made by Edward I in 1296-78 might suggest that there had been a spate of wholesale forfeitures in the period immediately after the battle of Dunbar in 1296 it is perhaps more likely that those restorations were the product of 'blanket' forfeitures of men who supported King John and/or men who failed to give service due for lands held in England.

It would seem that Edward III was not able to procure as much service from the Lothian community as his father and grandfather had done. The Bruce party was able to call on the services of 'electi' soldiers (literally 'chosen' men, the numbers involved, the conduct of the engagement and the fact that they were clearly not 'common army' conscripts suggests very strongly that they were men-at-arms) from below the Forth to fight at Culblean in November 1335. It is fair to assume that a portion of those men came from Lothian and that they were not giving army service to the Plantagenet administration. In 1335-6 over one hundred Lothian men and women were recorded as having been forfeited, some at least would surely have been men who had fought at Culblean, but whether they were or not; they were obviously not serving Edward III. The names of men giving service for land (as opposed to men serving for wages) were not recorded for posterity (though sheriffs and other responsible parties must have kept a register of service due and service discharged) so it is impossible to be clear how much service was available, let alone how much of it was performed. Equally, is clear from the accounts of the sheriff of Edinburgh in 1335-6 and 1336-7 that a very large proportion of each constabulary was, if not actually under the control of the Scots, destroyed or denied to the administration which must have adversely affected the ability of the administration to draw army service from the community.

Under Edward I and Edward II many Scots served in English garrisons for wages, and this continued to be the case under Edward III, but the pattern of that service was not the same. A large proportion of the identifiable Scots in garrison service in the 1330s would seem to have been drawn from the ranks of the disinherited. As men whose prospects were dependent on the successful establishment of a Balliol/Plantagenet government it is unsurprising that several of them should have joined garrisons, however many of them may have found that garrison service was their only means of livelihood. They might have been theoretically restored to their properties by the Plantagenet administration, but it is open to question how many were ever able to realize their lordship. Those whose property lay outside the areas of Plantagenet/Balliol lordship would still have been unable to collect their rents and casualties. The appearance of men from the west of Scotland in the garrison records of Edinburgh and Berwick perhaps points in that direction.

If Edward III were to pursue his Scottish ambitions successfully (even if those ambitions were essentially limited to an outpost strategy aimed at preventing serious Scottish intervention in a future war with France) he would have needed to support these men in some way, as he did Edward Balliol. They, in tum, could reasonably expect to further their own ambitions more easily if they were resident in Scotland, and, as active supporters of the Plantagenet/Balliol cause could expect to be rewarded in the event of the Bruce party being defeated. For some at least, garrison service was the only valid option other than defection to the Bruce party, a choice which was less than likely to lead to restoration since that would often require the displacement of a Bruce supporter.

Although it is important to be wary of the tendency, encouraged by pro-Bruce chroniclers and historians, to conflate the Bruce cause and support for Scottish independence, it is equally important to recognize that to some extent at least, there was an association of the two from at least the spring of 1307 in the minds of a segment of the population. In May of that year an English officer or sympathizer stationed in Forfar wrote to a senior official that Robert Bruce 'never had the good will of his own followers or of the people at large or even half of them as now' and that if he could escape to Ross he would ‘find them all ready at his will more entirely than ever'. The writer may have felt moved to exaggerate the strength of Bruce support in order to encourage Edward II's government to provide more men-at-arms, but he surely perceived the Bruce party as a serious threat.

The statement that Bruce would gain the support of the people 'more than ever' would seem curious in an area where the Bruces did not have a particularly well established tradition of lordship. If Robert could enjoy popular support in Angus there is no reason to suppose that there was no sympathy at all in Lothian for the Bruce cause, only that it was not strong enough to have any great effect on the political stability of the community.

Even in the spring/summer of 1306 there was sufficient disturbance in the south and east of Scotland for Edward II's government to spend 60s on the hire of shipping to carry 200 men-at-arms from Berwick to Perth 'on account of enemies between Berwick and the king's army. Evidently Plantagenet lines of communication through eastern Scotland were not at all secure if a strong company of men-at-arms could not pass along them with impunity. The same document refers to pay for a man who had spent eighteen days ascertaining 'the will and state of the common men of those parts' (the vicinity of Perthshire). If the opinion of the common people was of no significance, or if there was no expectation that they might side with the Bruce party there would have been no point in making such a reconnaIssance.

The Bruce cause and independent kingship presumably did become firmly connected in popular consciousness as the mainsprings of Scottish political identity. A growing tradition of anti-English feeling would inevitably have led to support for the most effective opposition to the English, and such a tradition would almost certainly have developed in the two generations of children that grew up in war zones between the close of the thirteenth century and the middle of the fourteenth.

No doubt the exploits of Scottish heroes helped to inspire confidence in times of crisis, though it is questionable whether these crises were necessarily quite as dire as chronicle accounts might lead us to believe. The Bruce party may have been reduced to a handful of castles in 1333 -414 but how significant is that observation, even assuming its accuracy? The extent of damage inflicted by King Robert's policy of slighting castles may not have been enough to raze them to the ground, but it must have been enough to compromise their security. We might question how many viable fortresses would have been available for the Scots to hold even if the manpower had been available.

Fordun and Bower had demands on their work beyond the simple relation of events. The more bleak the fortunes of the Scots in 1333-5, the more spectacular their recovery after 1335. Perhaps more significantly, two years after Halidon Hill, Edward's Scottish administration was already under severe pressure, if not actually failing. The Earl of Dunbar, Edward's most important adherent in the south-east, had returned to Bruce allegiance sometime before February 1335 15 and led troops from below the Forth to fight at Culblean. The forfeiture of over one hundred Lothian free tenants by Michaelmas 1336 16 would hardly suggest that the Plantagenet administration there \vas attracting the support of the local political community at a time when the Bruce party was gaining the military initiative throughout the country as a whole, indeed there was a 'steady trickle' of defections to the Bruce party from early 1335 onward.

The defection of the Earl must be regarded as particularly significant. As an experienced and cautious politician he would surely not have embraced the Bruce cause in 1335 had he not been extremely confident of their eventual victory. Earl Patrick had more to lose than most and the bulk of his property was very vulnerable to English operations; however he was in an excellent position to gauge the strengths and weaknesses of the English administration since he was a part of its command structure. His example may have been instrumental in persuading other members of the political community to follow suit, or even possibly the other way round; Patrick was granted the lands of any of his tenants forfeited for treason, but he might find it difficult, even impossible to enforce those forfeitures if a large enough proportion of his tenants were active Bruce supporters. Any such failure would undermine his prestige and authority and his credibility as a senior political figure. Any of his tenants could also be confident of restoration in the event of Bruce success, which was hardly the case for the earl.

It is always possible that Patrick underwent an ideological conversion, that he was persuaded of the justice of the Bruce cause and defected as a matter of political principle: however it is more probable that his decision was based very strongly on a sober appreciation of the situation and the desire to back a winner. Had the Plantagenet administration been in good condition in 1335 it is very unlikely that the Earl would have defected.The significance of the defection of Patrick, or of Sir Alexander Seton, may lie more in leadership by example than formal power in a command structure. If prominent men with (probably) better sources of intelligence and with greater estates at risk decided that the time had come to join the Bruce party, then others, beyond their tenants and other dependents, might be moved to join them.

If the Bruce party was successful it would do no harm to have followed the lead of local men who were likely to be influential in the community once the war was over. Moreover, these same men might well be of some importance on the national political stage in the future and be helpful in procuring preferment for local men who had proved themselves as supportive neighbours. Seton had in fact been granted particular military leadership privileges in Lothian by Robert I, including the 'superiority' of various properties and the 'leadership' of all his men.

The implication must be that the leadership of the men of these properties had previously lain elsewhere, perhaps with the sheriff. Presumably there was a military command significance to these grants, perhaps giving the baron in question the power to raise a retinue of man-at-arms for the general conduct of war and/or a formation of infantry for the (rather rare) mustering of a large field army. Even very small armies require some form of articulation if they are to function adequately. A provision to enable men of proven military experience to raise discrete formations from men to whom they were already familiar as local figures of authority would be a simple means of achieving some degree of articulation. The 'men' of Alexander Seton or Robert Lauder or James Douglas would become 'units' within the army alongside, or perhaps as sub-units of, the 'armies of sheriffdoms and earldoms. The usual practice of the war did not, however, depend on the deployment of large armies of maneuver, but of small mobile parties, and grants of 'superiority' or 'leadership' may have been more significant in that setting. Whatever the precise implications of leadership and superiority in a military context, it would seem most likely that the intention of such grants was to provide authority and convey responsibility for a structured system of 'units' or retinues that could be deployed individually or in concert to specific tasks or operations without recourse to indentures - and financial rewards - for the supply of troops in general, and perhaps men-at-arms in particular.

Although it is apparent that the majority of operational service was conducted by men-at-arms drawn from the political community, it would be rash to assume that these men, even in the most intense periods of conflict, were continually, even regularly, committed to engagements. In campaigns conducted by small parties of relatively specialized soldiers individual casualties make more impression on the strength, and more significantly the morale, of the forces involved. In a war of small mobile parties a successful contact with the enemy would comprise engaging, achieving an objective and disengaging without serious loss, preferably driving the enemy off without incurring any casualties at all. Operations would be a matter of achieving local dominance through demonstration, rather than actual combat.

Even when combat did occur the number of fatalities need not have been high. The mobility and armour of the man-at-arms afforded him some degree of protection in combat and some hope of escaping from an unsuccessful encounter. If defeated and unable to escape, there was every chance that a ransom - or defection - could be negotiated. This may in fact have been the practical battlefield significance of heraldry. The likelihood of being able accurately to recognise several thousand devices and know whether the bearer ,vas in the Bruce or Plantagenet party would be very slim beyond, perhaps, the devices of neighbours and great lords? The fact that a man bore a device at all would indicate that he would probably have sufficient resources to be worth holding for ransom.

Not unnaturally, the wars encouraged the development of a tradition of anti-English sentiment in Scotland. Generations that grew up in time of endemic war with what was fast becoming 'the auld enemy' would be inclined toward the most effective opposition to the Plantagenets. From 1296 to 1304 this was the cause of King John. From 1306 onward it was the Bruce party. Between 1333 and 1341 the war may generally have been

conducted by small-scale forces, but it brought men to prominence on the basis of their martial conduct. Men like Sir William Douglas of Lothian or Sir Alexander Ramsay of Dalhousie provided examples of heroic and successful leadership and formed the basis of a Scottish military tradition which, all things considered, was remarkably successful throughout the fourteenth century.

Military activity itself was obviously a factor in the extension or contraction of lordship; however, the product of that activity has to be considered. In the period between 1296 and the fall of Edinburgh castle in March 1314 the Plantagenet administration in Lothian was reasonably secure. Wallace marched on Haddington and withdrew without noticeable opposition, possibly gaining temporary occupation of some non-royal castles in the process and in 1303 the Scots won a fight at Roslin, but neither event seems to have seriously threatened the existence of the administration. Of course it was not the function of the garrisons to engage a large field army, but to prevent a competing source of authority from exerting lordship in the area.

King Robert was able to draw blackmail from the community of Lothian before 1314, but while his ability to do so demonstrates his power, it also demonstrates his inability to exert lordship in the face of the Plantagenet government. If the Lothian community accepted Plantagenet rule in 1296-1314 with apparent equanimity and Bruce rule in 1314-33 without resistance, is it adequate to say that the Lothian political community was simply willing to accept the authority of the de facto government of the day regardless of its political colour? This may have been the case, but that would demand an explanation of the extent of overt Bruce support in Lothian by 1335-6. If a Bruce victory was not perceived as the likely outcome in the long term it would be incomprehensible that so many of the political community would have been willing to risk life and limb for a political ambition that was unlikely to materialize. Some of the hundred or so Lothian freeholders forfeited in l335-6 may have been motivated by simple nationalism, but surely the majority made a sober assessment of the situation and decided that the Bruce cause was the more attractive for rather more prosaic reasons. Some of these forfeited persons would of course have lost their property to members of the disinherited and would have an obvious incentive to join the Bruce party. Equally, the desire of Edward III and Edward Balliol to build a 'constituency' of support in the political community, and the perennial shortage of men-at-arms that hampered them both, could have led to negotiated settlements that would have kept such men in the Balliol or Plantagenet peace.

The forfeiture of one hundred free tenants, surely many more than had benefited from Bruce grants, would have cut a swathe through the political community, and demonstrates a degree of public confidence in the Bruce cause, but, bearing in mind the severity of the defeats at Dupplin and Halidon Hill and the presence of a powerful garrison at Edinburgh after 1335, may not be representative of Bruce/nationalist sympathy in the Lothian political community as a whole. The absence of resistance to Bruce kingship after 1314 and after 1341, in contrast to the very clear evidence of Bruce support (or at least antipathy to the Plantagenets) in Lothian in 1335-6, suggests that the political community of Lothian came to adhere to the Bruce party over the course of the Wars of Independence.

That adherence need not have been born out of the good lordship of Robert I so much as a confidence that a Bruce government would be more effective at excluding war from Lothian than a Plantagenet one. Edward II's administration failed in 1314 and Edward Ill's by the spring of 1341 but it had obviously been struggling for some years before that. Indeed, Edward Ill's authority, like that of his father's, was undermined by his inability to control the behaviour of his garrisons, let alone prevent the encroachment of the Scots.

Edward did not attempt to restore his administration in Lothian after Neville's Cross in 1346. Admittedly there were no forces available for the purpose, but it would have been very difficult for any new Plantagenet government in Lothian to establish its' credibility at the third attempt. Further, while it is clear that Scottish nationalism was a vehicle for the Bruce party, we should not ignore the possibility that the Bruce party was a vehicle for nationalists. Men and women might well support the Bruces simply because they were the only credible source of authority with a genuinely Scottish agenda.

The Plantagenets adopted a policy of granting extensive estates m Lothian to the men they appointed to office there, particularly Sir Robert Hastang under Edward II and Sir John Strivelin under Edward III. This was presumably intended as a means of giving these men local leadership rights over their tenants, and perhaps neighbours, as a means of bolstering their resources and giving them status in the political community. That policy may have been counter-productive to some extent. The political community of Lothian were not accustomed to the leadership of magnates, and though Robert may have adopted a similar policy in effect by extending the lands and rights of Sir Alexander Seton and Sir Robert Lauder, he was promoting the interests of Lothian men rather than imposing new men in positions of authority.

In the absence of an established magnate the Lothian political community would look to the crown for preferment. Other figures would of course have wielded some degree of influence. The Earls of March and Fife were both extensive landholders in Lothian, though not sufficiently so for them to dominate the political community. The Bishop of St. Andrews was also a significant landholder in the county, as the presence of several 'bishop's tenants' on the Ragman Roll demonstrates. His tenants were obviously considered important enough to be ranked in among the free tenants and burgesses, and no doubt the bishop's tenants were briefed on a general policy position, but it would have been very difficult for the Bishop himself to take a very active part in the deliberations of the community given his duties and responsibilities elsewhere.

It might be a reasonable conclusion that the political community in Lothian was less trammelled by layers of authority and influence than that of other counties. Essentially the Lothian landholder had to keep on the right side of the party in power, but did not have to worry too much about other sources of authority, such as an earl or other great lord whose priorities might clash with those of the government and/or the local community. Roxburghshire and Berwickshire lairds, and not just those who were his tenants, would surely have felt some pressure to support the Earl of Dunbar at each of his defections though they might personally have felt more inclined to stay either in Bruce allegiance in 1333 or in Plantagenet allegiance in 1335. Superficially it would seem that Lothian landholders were spared the complications of an intermediate level of authority between themselves and the crown, but local leadership structures will have existed, however transient or informal? It is possible that leadership groups are reflected in a number of records relating to forfeiture and restoration. A group of men are described as 'coming to the king's peace (Edward I) with the Earl of Stratheam. Another group were forfeited along with Sir Alexander de Moubray when he defected to the Bruce camp in 1334 over an inheritance dispute. All of the latter group were accepted into Edward III's peace and restored shortly thereafter. What is not clear is the nature of the grouping in either instance. The men who joined Edward I's peace with the Earl of Strathearn may have been his tenants, his relatives, his friends and acquaintances or simply a body of men who took the opportunity to defect in the company of a powerful and influential man who could secure good terms from Edward's government. It is not impossible that they were not in any sense a conscious grouping, merely a body of men whose defection occurred at a given point and that the Earl was no more than the most prominent figure in that group. It

is quite conceivable that the document in question groups these men together as nothing more than an administrative convenience, and that the inclusion of some or all of them was not the outcome of a conscious decision by, or on behalf of, a group of men with shared political views, merely a record of men who had defected.

The defection of Moubray, Alexander Craigie and others in 1334 could be seen in a slightly different light. Superficially it would seem that they chose to abandon the Plantagenet/Balliol peace at a time when the fortunes of the Bruce party were at a very low- ebb. There is some cause to suspect that the position of David II's government was not perhaps quite so precarious as it appears to have been, but it was certainly in a very weak condition. Craigie submitted to Edward III in August 1335, but both his defection from, and return to, Plantagenet peace were the product of dissent and reconciliation within the Plantagenet/Balliol camp rather than of political ideology.

Neither instance is solid evidence for the existence of longterm leadership groups within Lothian, though Lothian men were involved on both occasions. That does not mean that such groups did not exist. It is quite possible that if all the material concerning relationships - familial, social, local, commercial, judicial, political and military - relating to Lothian people could be collated, instances of concerted political activity by apparently distinct groups within the political community could be identified. Even so, whether the patterns emerging represented actual instances of local political leadership or chance agglomerations of people who happened to be connected with one another would still be open to question.

Of course, since we cannot be aware of all of the connections between all of the members of the political community or of all their actions, any group that comes together in record might conceivably represent a leadership group of some sort. The jurors on the De Pinkney Post Mortem Inquisition in 1296 might, for all we know, be a group of men with a specific, recognizable identity that was readily familiar to fourteenth-century Scots. They might have been the jurors of a particular subdivision of the constabulary of Haddington, men of a particular status with a judicial relationship to a specific barony, men who owed their position to the nepotism of a particular family or group of families. Alternatively, and this is obviously the most likely proposition, they might simply be men chosen at random from those members of the political community with suit of court responsibilities. No doubt several of them were related to one another or were neighbours, but their presence on the Inquisition does not imply membership of a stable leadership group other than that of the Lothian political community as a whole.

Is it reasonable to consider the Lothian political community as a leadership group in itself? The apparent ease with which Lothian accepted Plantagenet rule in 1296-1314 and Bruce rule in 1314-33 might suggest that the community could, to some degree, act in concert in the search for good lordship; Lothian did not accept Robert I's kingship until he had achieved a major battlefield success. It is clear that Edward III's government met much more opposition in the 1330s. Whereas Lothian would not accept the authority of King Robert until some months after the fall of Edinburgh castle in 1314, the community was prepared to accept the authority of Laurence Preston as sheriff in 1338 when the castle was under siege. This may indicate a loss of confidence in the Plantagenet administration and/or a fear of the Bruce party. It surely indicates both to some extent. However there is a possibility that the political community was quite prepared to accept Bruce authority on the condition that the Bruce party intervened physically against the Plantagenet party. Should such intervention be successful, the Lothian political community would be on the 'right' (winning) side. Should it fail, the political community could claim that they had been obliged to submit through force.

The willingness of the community to accept changes in the source of authority could be seen as the operation of one significant leadership group within the community, focused on the crown as the source of preferment and protection. This might explain the apparently uncontested transfer of power from John to Edward I and from Edward II to Robert I in the wake of 'decisive' battles, but would not sit comfortably with the inability of Edward III consistently to impose his rule in Lothian in 1335-6 despite a position of considerable military superiority, or the acceptance of Bruce authority in 1338 or 1341.

Perhaps the most significant factor in determining the allegiance of Lothian men in the years after Halidon Hill was the activity of two barons, William Douglas of Lothian and Alexander Ramsay of Dalhousie. The families of the two men whose influence in Lothian had been most enhanced by Robert I - Sir Alexander Seton and Sir Robert Lauder- failed to provide the Bruce party with effective leadership in Lothian after Halidon Hill and were eclipsed by Douglas and Ramsay.

Their rise to prominence in the 1330s lay in their abilities as soldiers, providing effective war leadership to Bruce sympathizers in Lothian. The extent of that sympathy by late 1334/early 1335 is impossible to judge, but it must have been substantial enough to help persuade him (and another astute politician, the Earl of Dunbar) that commitment to the Bruce party was in his best long-term interests. To the extent that both Douglas and Ramsay were fighting the same enemy under the same flag they were allies, but each was ambitious to retain in peacetime the lands, offices and leadership status that they had attained in the defeat of Edward Ill's administration.

On his return from France, David II could not afford to alienate Douglas. He was obliged to accept the extension of his lordship, but endeavored, unsuccessfully, to curtail Douglas' ambitions by appointing Ramsay sheriff of Teviotdale and constable of Roxburgh in 1342. Douglas promptly murdered Ramsay, confident that he would be able survive the inevitable fury of the king. The price of Douglas support for the Bruces was effective Douglas dominance in the southeast, but Douglas still sought the king's endorsement of his gains. If Edward I, II and III and Robert I all tried to manufacture Lothian magnates in the shape of Hastangs, Seton and Strivelin, it would seem that Douglas succeeded where they failed.

According to Bower there were three magnates in Scotland in September 1335: Andrew Moray, the Earl of Dunbar, and Sir William Douglas of Lothian. Naturally, the allegiance of Lothian landholders did not rest entirely with domestic considerations, be they social, military or political. The difficulties and distractions of Edward I, II and III were important contributory factors to the progress of the wars, and thus in the political lives of Lothian landholders. For a variety of reasons, none of the three was able consistently to concentrate their resources on the conquest of Scotland. They were intermittently hampered by war in Flanders and France, dissent at home, diplomatic constraints and a perennial shortage of money and troops, particularly men-at-arms, for whom service in France was a more attractive proposition financially.

Effective government requires credibility, and by the later 1330s that may have been a consideration for all parties. Edward Ill's failure to mount a relief of Edinburgh castle in 1341, or an operation to bring about its recovery, would surely be a strong indication to the Lothian community that he had lost confidence in the ability of his administration to establish itself. Since Edward had already failed to take Dunbar castle or to relieve Bothwell castle it would be surprising if the political community had not lost credibility in Edward's capacity to provide good lordship.

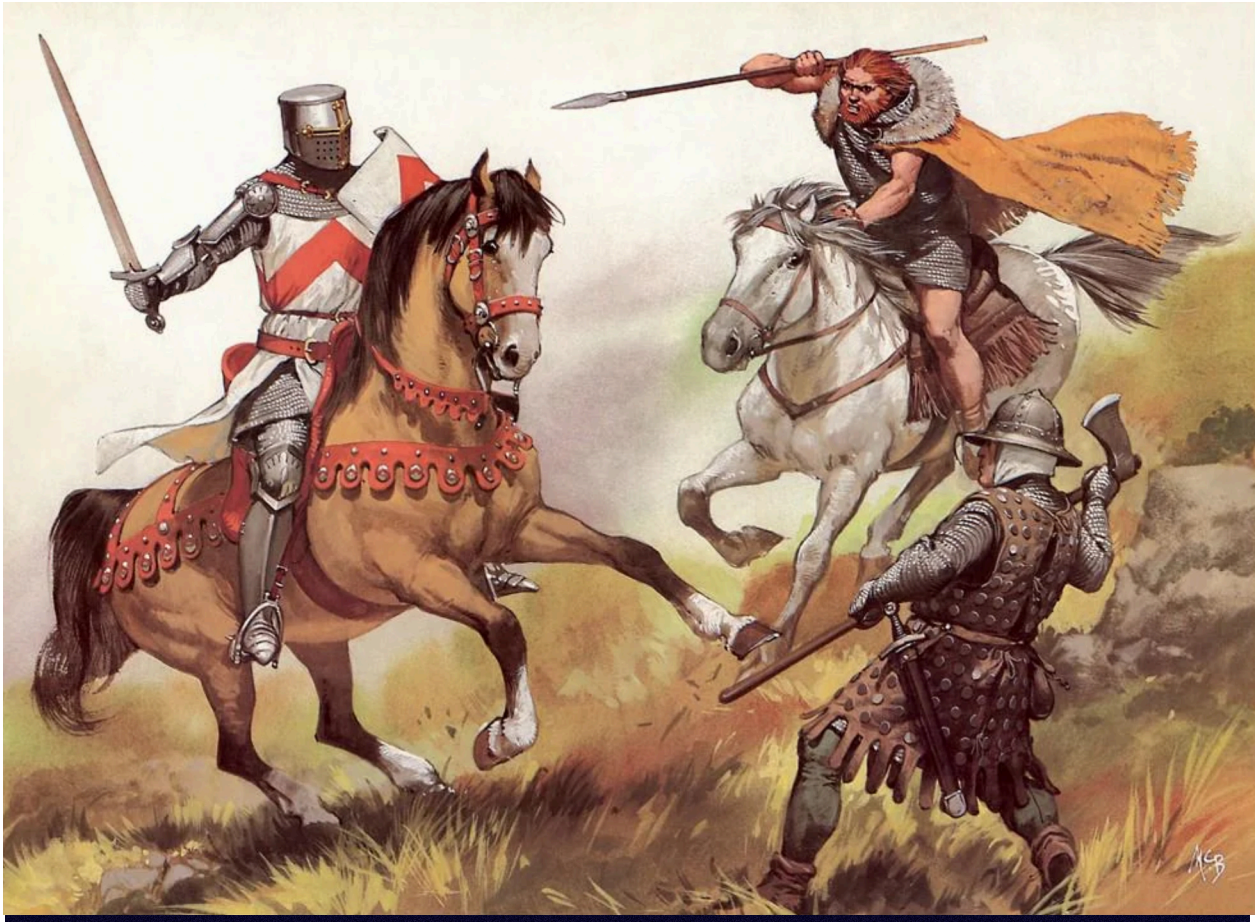
Edward's commitment to war with France is often seen as the key to Scottish success in the late 1330s; but it is worth bearing in mind that by the time Edward went to war with France the Bruce party had already staged a remarkable recovery, despite considerable internal divisions and signal defeats on the battlefield. Edward was unable to afford sufficient support to Edward Balliol, to prevent the recovery of the Scots north of the Forth through the mid to late 1330s despite the deployment of a number of substantial armies. Further, due to the acquisition of better equipment, the Scots no longer had to rely on the failure of supply to force the surrender of a garrison.

St. Andrews castle and Bothwell castle were each battered into submission in a matter of a few weeks. In the period from the 1290s to fall of Berwick to King Robert, the length of time it took for the Scots to force a surrender had meant that there was a reasonable chance that a relief could be mounted and a siege raised. By 1337 the window of opportunity for such operations had evidently become much smaller. More significantly, the value of such operations had been severely compromised. If the Scots could not be brought to battle and if castles and towns captured by major English invasions could be recovered swiftly, what was the point in mounting expensive expeditions? Obviously the Scots won their war of independence, but at what juncture was it clear that they had done so? Further, at what point did the war cease to be a question of Scottish independence? From an operational viewpoint the issue of independence had been settled before the return of David II from exile in France.

Edward III continued to refuse recognition of David's kingship, but was unable to prevent the Bruce party from achieving independence as a political reality. David's operations in the north of England were aimed at forcing recognition of his rule, not at freeing his country from the spectre of conquest and subjugation. Even his capture at Neville's Cross in 1346 did not put Scottish independence at serious risk. The diplomatic and political issues remained at the heart of the relationship between England and Scotland, but the military issue had been effectively resolved by the fall of Edinburgh castle in 1341. The fact that the Scots chose to garrison the castle, rather than destroy it, is a clear indication of their confidence as much as the failure of Edward III to attempt its recovery is an indication of his acceptance that the war could not be won by military means. Diplomatic initiatives might sweeten the pill of military failure, but the pill still had to be swallowed, however reluctantly.

The precise point at which the tide of the conflict turned in favour of the Scots is open to question, as the point at which it changed from being a war of independence to a war between sovereign kingdoms is open to question, but clearly the course and nature of the conflict did change. In the end of the day, the Scots most certainly won their war. What of the fortunes of the political community of Lothian? Regardless of the processes that induced resistance or defection, it is clear that the majority of Lothian landholding families managed to survive each change of government from the appearance of individuals and their heirs under successive governments and the survival of family names into the later fourteenth century.

Two Lothian-based families, the Lardners and the Linlithgows, disappeared from Lothian entirely. The disappearance of family groups may be more apparent than real. Merely because a family disappears from a particular location during a war is not evidence that their departure was either directly or indirectly a consequence of the conflict, or even that the family had departed at all. The practice of children bearing the name of their father rather than their mother could lead to the disappearance of the family name even though the descent of the property had never been affected by the war. An estate without a legitimate heir at all would escheat to the crown or a financially incompetent landholder



Artwork: Angus McBride

could be forced to sell up, again, without the influence of the war. Further, people might have chosen to relocate in an effort to avoid war in the future, or to remove themselves from the scene of a traumatic past or been offered an attractive opportunity elsewhere. For most, however, the overriding priority was the retention of the family property no matter which party was in power. This was partly a matter of tradition and partly a matter of where they were to go and what they were to do for an income if they were forfeited.

Perhaps surprisingly, given the extent of the conflict, relocation does not seem to have been a priority. The retention of the family property does. At least one member of every family profiled for this thesis was, at some point, in the peace of Edward I, Edward II or Edward III, several families were in the peace of all three, but members of at least twenty eight of those thirty-six families were able to reach an accommodation with the Scottish crown after the defeat of Edward III's Lothian administration in 1341. Even the Craigie family, who had been, with the exception of a short period, steadfast in the Plantagenet peace and staunch supporters of the Balliol cause, had a member of the family knighted by David II in 1342 despite the fact that Sir Alexander de Craigie, along with his son and his cousin, both named Alexander, were still in the peace of Edward III in 1343. Clearly the majority of Lothian families managed to retain some, if not all, of their heritage, which strongly suggests that the political community of Lothian survived the Wars of Independence remarkably well despite the political and military stresses of nearly half a century of war.

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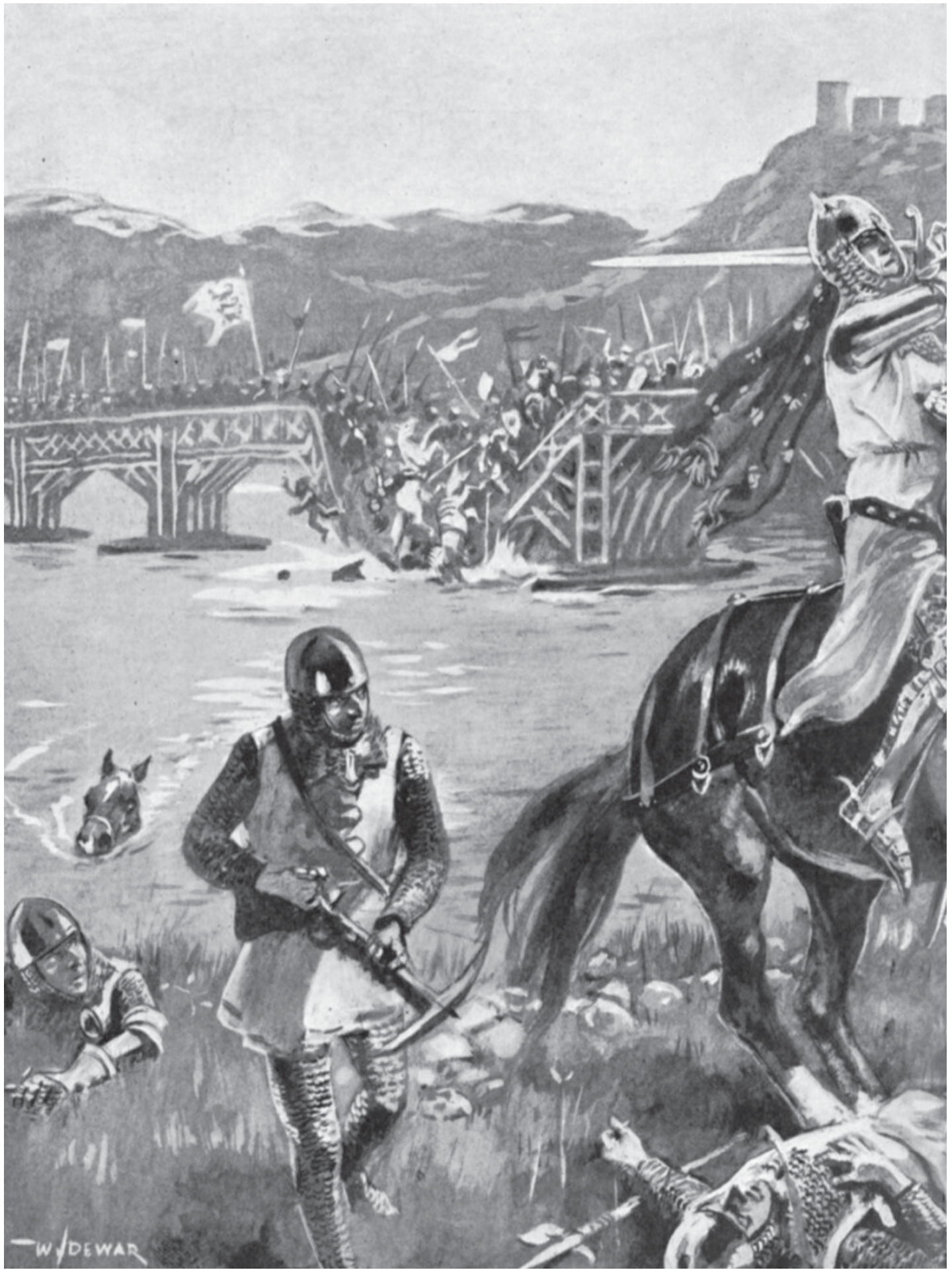
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